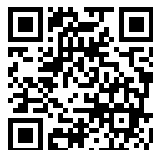
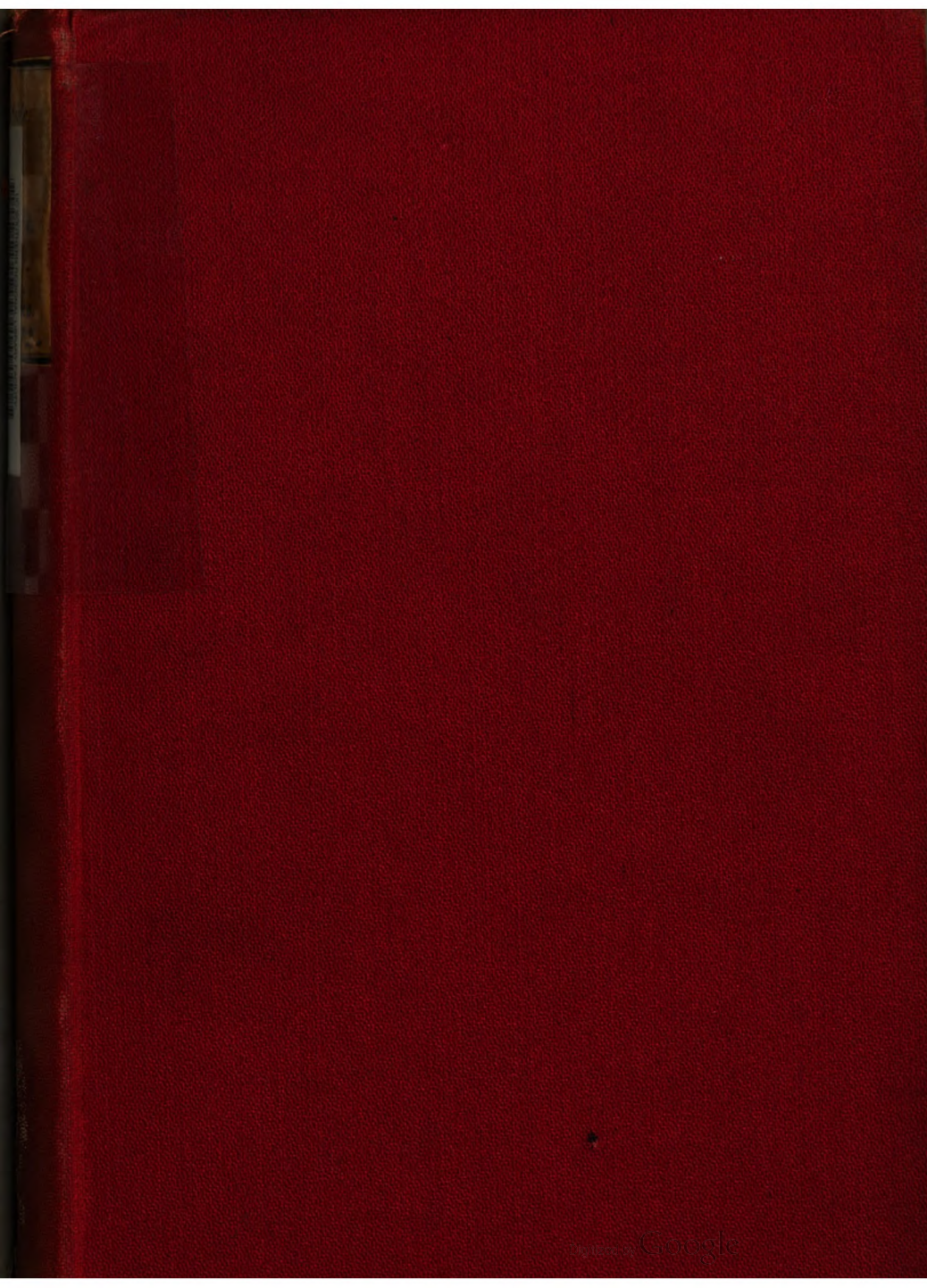

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PASSIONTIDE

CONTINUATION OF THE PUBLIC LIFE OF OUR LORD

BY
HENRY JAMES COLERIDGE
OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

PART THE SECOND



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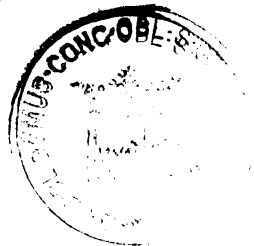
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SUIS TRADENDUS ÆMULIS
PRIUS IN VITÆ FERCULO
SE TRADIDIT DISCIPULIS

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O SALUTARIS HOSTIA
QUÆ CÆLI PANDIS OSTIUM
BELLA PREMUNT HOSTILIA
DA ROBUR FER AUXILIUM



PREFACE.

THE contents of the present volume were in great part written nearly a year ago, and they would have been published, sooner than has been actually possible, but for serious ill-health, which may also delay somewhat the rest of the work to which the volume belongs, though I have a good hope, in the mercy of God, that I may be allowed to complete it. I venture to say this, in order that I may secure the indulgence of my readers, as well as a continuation of their prayers, to which I am deeply sensible that I already owe more than I can say.

I fear it may be thought by some that the amount of subject-matter in the present volume, which consists mainly in little more than the contents of two chapters of St. John, does not promise a very speedy completion of the whole work. But it must be remembered that those two chapters of St. John are among the most important in his whole Gospel, and the consideration of them has involved the discussion, on the part of the author, of several most difficult and momentous questions. A writer on this part of St. John has to settle for himself—though it is not

necessary to lay the whole arguments on various sides before the reader—all the questions which relate to the famous controversies among critics as to the time of the celebration of the Last Supper, the connection between the Paschal celebration of the Old Law and the Christian Eucharist, and the like. Indeed, it has been thought by some that our Blessed Lord did not partake of the Paschal supper at all on the night before His Passion, and the controversy as to the time at which the Jews in general celebrated it is yet unsettled. The examination of this question may well be left to the learned. But it is necessary, for the satisfactory discharge of his duties on the part of the author of a work like this, that he should go over the whole once more before finally leaving it. Another very instructive question relates to the miserable traitor Judas and his treatment by our Lord, on which these chapters of St. John, taken in connection with the relations of the supper at Bethany by him and the other Evangelists, throw a great deal of light.

In all such questions there is always much to be learnt by a close and loving study of our Lord's words and deeds. There are also not a few questions which have to be settled concerning the order of the events of the evening of Holy Thursday, as to which St. John is our chief authority, and which require careful consideration. After these we have to enter upon the invaluable treasure which St. John has preserved to the Church in the long discourse of our

Lord, a part of which only has been treated of as yet. And there are also most interesting questions to be considered as to the presence or absence of Judas from the holy company when the Blessed Sacrament was first given and the Adorable Sacrifice instituted. When I mention also the beautiful and most significant ceremony of the Lavanda, and all the questions that have been raised concerning it, I shall have probably said enough to satisfy my readers that the time has not been wasted which has been spent on this volume. Indeed, I am far more afraid of deserving reproach for treating great matters in an apparently slight manner than for having given them too much attention. On this point I can only say that the pages of this volume will reflect but comparatively little of the labour which has been bestowed on them.

I am tempted here to say a few words on a point which has frequently claimed much consideration in the course of these volumes, but which at the present stage of the work has an importance still more prominent than before. I speak of the study of the Gospel Harmony, by any one who undertakes either a general work on the Life of our Blessed Lord, or even a commentary on any one of the Evangelists, or on them all consecutively. The history of this study in the Catholic Church has been very curious, but this is not the place to enter on it. But I am more and more convinced that it is important in a degree that has not yet been recognized by Catholic

commentators, too many of whom have been contented to settle individual questions as they meet their notice, without having any clear idea that this is a department of Biblical criticism which ought to be treated, in the first instance, by itself, and approached with a careful consideration of the principles on which it rests, before writers find themselves forced by some apparent difficulty to settle some question which starts up under their feet. The result is something like what would happen to a student who attempted to read a classical author with a dictionary only, without having studied the grammar of the language. Perhaps this comparison puts the case rather strongly, but it will at least serve to express my meaning. In any case, what it is well to say now is that in the part of our Blessed Lord's history on which I have been engaged in the present volume, there are quite a number of questions as to which I have found a knowledge of the Harmony invaluable, and have seemed to myself to see the want of this study in many authors whom otherwise I should feel more scruple in appearing to differ from. For in fact, as is said in the body of the work more than once, this is a part of the Gospel History in which the principles of the Harmony are so important, that it is hardly possible to neglect them or ignore them without multiplying difficulties, if we do not altogether succumb under them.

On the other hand, what seems at first sight difficult to understand concerning more than one point,

seems to shine with a quite unexpected clearness when we apply to it the light that a consideration of the principles which the Harmony gives us. I cannot expect my readers to take this merely on my own word. But certainly I have found the difficulties which beset the History of the Passion, from the seeming conflict between the early Evangelists and St. John, resolve themselves into an increase of light, and an addition of knowledge of our Lord's work and character, when the statements of the Beloved Apostle have been considered in their due relation to the earlier accounts, as to the day on which the Jews and our Lord respectively are thought to have eaten the Paschal supper. It has been the same with the history of the dismissal of Judas, where St. John seems in conflict, not indeed with any statements of these others, who say nothing at all about the time at which the traitor left the Cenacle, but with the conclusions as to his presence at the institution of the Holy Eucharist, which were drawn from the earlier accounts. It has been the same also with the history of that blessed institution itself, and I look forward in the next volume, if I live to be able to complete it, to other instances of the same advantage to be found from the same source.

I need not speak of the beauty of the account which St. John gives us of that part of the sacred history which has been left more or less entirely to him; the history, I mean, of the evening of Holy Thursday. It is here particularly that we owe to

St. John a debt which can never be exaggerated, and I need make no apology for the comparative length at which I have felt obliged to treat his text, which indeed is brevity itself, when we remember that this account occupies more than a fourth part of his Gospel, and that the words here recorded were the last earthly conversation of our Lord with the Apostles. I have been obliged to break off after the beginning of the second part of this great discourse, as the most convenient point at which it can be divided ; but I have finished a great part of the remainder, which ends, as my readers are aware, with what is in one sense the most wonderful part of the whole Gospel, the Prayer to the Eternal Father with which the history of the sayings and doings in the Cenacle concludes.

I may here mention that I have now reached a point in the work to which I have long looked forward, as giving me the opportunity for explaining what may perhaps have been noticed by the readers of the first volume of the series which I have been able to put forward on the Life of our Blessed Lord, the *Vita Vitæ Nostræ meditantibus proposita*. That work was published early in 1869, more than twenty-one years ago. I could not tell then whether I should be able to publish the volumes which have since appeared, much more be able to explain at any length the principles which had guided me in the decisions which, as a Harmonist, it was incumbent on me to make. Moreover, in the Preface to that work, which

was intended primarily for the use of those who have the custom of meditating for themselves on the Gospel history, it was said that the order here and there might have been different, if I had not regarded the convenience of those for whom I was arranging the text. Special mention was made of the plan that had been pursued in it, for the sake of convenience, by which in certain cases care had been taken to keep incidents separate from one another which might more strictly have been conjoined, especially in the part of the Harmony which we are now engaged upon. It was pointed out that, for the same reason the discourse of our Lord in the Cenacle had not been divided as it might have been. At that time I had already formed a strong opinion that the right place for the insertion of the accounts given by St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, of the institution of the Eucharist, was in the middle of this discourse of our Lord in St. John, after the words, 'Let us go hence.' But, for the reason above mentioned, and because it was not yet time to explain the argument in full detail, I was unwilling to put forward without discussion what might seem to some a new view, and contented myself with a notice like that mentioned above, which might be appealed to as showing at any future time, if occasion came, that I thought that another arrangement would be better.¹

¹ I may add that both in the *Life of our Life*, two introductory volumes, with an English Harmony, published in 1874, and in an

In the present volume the reader will find this view justified by the arguments which seem to me to make it the most probable of all, though I am conscious that it will not at once gain universal approval. I have therefore left the Harmony as it originally stood, with the one exception of the postponement of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament into the middle of the section after that which, in the *Vita Vitæ*, came next to it. I am constantly more and more satisfied with the correctness of the views as to the Harmony with which I began the work, and which I believe will make their way to general acceptance, in proportion as greater and greater attention is paid by Catholic theologians and commentators to the subject in general. Whether the application of the principles of which I speak has always been rightly made by this or that Harmonist is another question, and I for my part shall be content if I see these principles accepted, though there may be an indefinite number of cases in which those who apply them may differ. I think they will ultimately prevail, because I think them true, and because, having spent now many years in passing from one part of the Gospel history to another, I have found them, as I conceive, to hold good wherever there has been a question to which they are applicable. They have seemed to me as

abridgment of the same, published under the name of the *Works and Words of our Saviour*, published a few years later, the view which I had held from the first, though not put forward at length, was also mentioned as probably correct.

useful for the solution of difficulties, as the disregard of them has seemed prolific in producing confusion in the writers who neglect them. I might say more—for a strain has sometimes been put on the words and the plain meaning of the holy Evangelists which cannot but tend to give false notions of their authority and accuracy.

This must be enough to have said, for the present, on this important subject. I conclude by laying this instalment of the work with the deepest gratitude at the feet of Him for Whose glory it is enough to have laboured, however poorly.

H. J. C.

London, 31, Farm Street, W.

Feast of St. Gregory the Great, 1890.

ERRATUM, p. 66.

**In the quotation from the hymn of St. Thomas, the second line should
begin with the word *Oro*, not *Orz*.**

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CHAPTER I.

The Betrayal of our Lord.

St. Matt. xxvi. 1—16 ; St. Mark xiv. 1—11 ; St. Luke xxii. 1—11 ;
Story of the Gospels, § 149.

THE exact date of the betrayal of our Lord by Judas is not quite certain, but there is good reason for supposing that it took place on the Wednesday in Holy Week, to which it is traditionally assigned. Some part of the difficulty arises from the apparent disagreement among the Evangelists on the point. The two first, St. Matthew and St. Mark, seem to connect it directly with the anointing of our Lord by the Blessed Magdalene, which no doubt was so far the occasion of the betrayal, that it provoked the ill-natured remark of Judas, and thus led to our Lord's defence of His beloved Saint. The rebuke must have added to the irritation of the traitor, and may have made him finally come to the resolution of taking part with the enemies of his Master. We shall, perhaps, speak hereafter of the state of mind of Judas at the time. Our present point is that St. Matthew, and St. Mark, who follows him in this matter, place the supper at Bethany, at which the anointing took place, after the teaching in the Temple and on the Mount of Olives, as it seems, on the Wednesday. St. Matthew does this, apparently as is natural to him, because of the moral connection between the two incidents. For the

anointing by Magdalene was, in the way we say, the occasion of the betrayal by Judas. On the other hand, St. John, who has filled up, especially in all this last half of his Gospel, so many gaps which had been left by the Evangelists who wrote before him, tells us, with the greatest clearness, and evidently with a direct intention of removing an obscurity, that the supper at Bethany and all its circumstances took place on the evening before the Procession of Palms, that is, as we suppose, on the Saturday.

This point is therefore certain, nor is there any difficulty in accounting for the transposal of the incident of the anointing by St. Matthew. At the time at which he wrote St. Magdalene was alive, and perhaps resident at Jerusalem or Bethany. We must remember that, however early we may place the composition of his whole Gospel, it must naturally have been put together from materials already existing, and that therefore a narrative like this may have been very probably in circulation among the teachers, at least, of the Church, from a still earlier period. It was on more than one ground expedient and right that names should not be mentioned unnecessarily in such cases, especially at first.¹ We have pointed out, too often to be called on to do so again, how much St. Matthew clings in his Gospel to the order of thought, rather than the order of time. St. Mark certainly does not always follow him in this, but he probably in this case had a good reason for not changing what he found in his predecessor, from the evident connection between the anointing and the betrayal, and good reasons that he

¹ It is not till the Gospel of St. John that we have several details given us, such as the name of the servant of the Chief Priest whose ear St. Peter cut off, and the like.

saw for the omission of the supper at Bethany in its right place by St. Matthew.

St. Luke omits this supper altogether, probably on account of the similarity of the incident of the anointing which then took place to that which had been performed by the same blessed penitent on the occasion of what we call her conversion, which he alone of the Evangelists has related.² Moreover, all these three Evangelists speak of the betrayal by Judas in immediate connection with a Council held in the house of Caiaphas by the Chief Priests, which was a natural prelude to the betrayal, and could not well have happened after it. The Council seems to have been held on the Wednesday, on the morning of which day we suppose our Lord to have uttered His great denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees. That denunciation may well have stung them to fury, especially as it came after the days of teaching in the Temple, in the course of which He had refused to acknowledge their right to question Him, and in several other ways had stirred them to anger. If the order of time which is here followed be right, Thursday morning or Wednesday evening would be the earliest time for Judas to execute his design of betrayal—perhaps at the very time that our Lord was delivering to the chosen Apostles His last prophecies, warnings, and instructions. It is here, then, that we may resume the narrative where it was left at the close of our last volume.

‘And it came to pass when Jesus had ended all these words, He said to His disciples, You know that after two days shall be the Pasch, and the Son of Man shall be delivered up to be crucified. Now the feast of the Pasch and of the Azymes was

² St. Luke vii. 36—50.

at hand, after two days.' The two days are to be understood in the same way as the other periods of the same kind mentioned in the New Testament, both when the words of the speakers are quoted, and in the narrative. That is, the days named are not considered as intervening between the time of speaking and the events spoken of, but as forming part of the space of time which includes them, 'after two days' signifying on the second day from this. St. Matthew tells us that our Lord Himself spoke of the Pasch as coming on, in connection with the delivering up of the Son of Man. This signifies that the Son of Man was to be delivered up to be crucified at the feast of the Pasch, which had been originally instituted as a promise and type of the great Sacrifice which He was to accomplish on the Cross. The Pasch was the time for the sacrifice of the lamb, and on that day the true Lamb of God, 'slain before the foundation of the world, as St. John says,³ was to be delivered up. The Evangelists go on to tell us that this was so done at that time, in direct contradiction to the intentions of the wicked men who were to bring about the Sacrifice. They had made up their minds that it should not be offered at that time. But the providential arrangement of God was not to be set aside, and, as was the case all through, the Chief Priests and others, who were plotting our Lord's murder, were not left to choose their own time for the execution of their plan. The one day which in their designs they particularly excluded, was the one day on which it was the will of God that these designs should be brought about. They were afraid, perhaps for themselves, perhaps for the public peace, if that day was chosen for the judicial murder they

³ Apoc. xiii. 8.

intended. And yet they were but the blind instruments of the Divine Counsel, which ordered that the true Lamb should be immolated for the sins of the world at the very time when the typical lamb had to be slain in the Temple.

'Then were gathered together the Chief Priests and ancients of the people into the court of the High Priest, who was called Caiphas, and they consulted together that by subtilty they might apprehend Jesus and put Him to death. But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest perhaps there should be a tumult among the people. But they feared the people.' The last words are added by St. Luke, and they seem to show, as has been said, that they were not only alarmed lest there should be a popular rising in favour of our Lord, which might have led to bloodshed, and probably to the interference of Pilate with his soldiers, who would not have shrunk from a massacre, but also, or chiefly, lest the people should rise against themselves, in which case their own lives would have been endangered.

It appears, therefore, that two things were decided in this final Council in the court of Caiphas. One was that they should at once take the necessary steps for the apprehension and trial of our Lord. It is characteristic of the men of whom we are speaking, that they do not seem to have thought of private assassination in this case. That their malice would not have shrunk from this, we may well suppose. But they would not 'take counsel' publicly for such a step. It was the great Council of the Sanhedrin, apparently, that was now convoked, and the only resolution that such a body could come to was that our Lord should be apprehended and judged. They were determined that the solemn

machinery of the Law should be used against our Lord, and the enmity of some of them, perhaps, would not have been satisfied if He had been taken out of the way clandestinely. Moreover, such a way of ridding themselves of Him would not have stamped His name with disgrace, and scattered those who believed in Him. But it is also characteristic of these priests that the issue of His apprehension and trial, to which they looked forward, was already a foregone conclusion with them. They took counsel 'that they might apprehend Him, and put Him to death.' They had no idea that His innocence might be the truth which would come forth from the examination of the charges against Him. They were to be themselves His judges. But with persons who have to decide on such charges it is usual, at all events formally, to abstain from committing themselves to any decision until the evidence has been heard and the defence made. They were to wait, in the eyes of the world, for the charge and the witnesses before they condemned Him. And yet in their own hearts the sentence was already passed, and the charge, and the witnesses, and the examination, were simple superfluities. They were in truth even more wicked than if they had hired assassins to poinard Him or poison Him, because they were resolved to add to the crime of murder another, which our Lord noticed of them in His words to Pilate, when He said that he could have had no power at all against Him except it were given him from above, and that therefore he that delivered Him to him had greater sin. They had determined, not His murder only, but His murder by the abuse of the sacred power of justice and the Law, put into their hands by God.

We seem to trace, in the Gospel history, the gradual advance of this diabolical plan in the minds of the ecclesiastical rulers. The whole scheme may have been born and come to maturity in the brain of Caiphas, and it may be of him that our Lord speaks in the words to Pilate just now quoted. In all bodies of men in authority or power there is usually some leading mind, who may surpass his companions in perspicacity of view, in the boldness with which his plans are conceived, and the adroitness with which they are pushed on. Some weeks, at least, must have passed since the miracle on Lazarus, and St. John tells us that after that miracle there had been a Council of the Chief Priests, in which Caiphas had made his famous 'prophecy,' telling the rest that they 'knew nothing, neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.'⁴ The words seem to imply that there was some hesitation on the part of many of them, as to the strong measures which were even then in the minds of bolder spirits, like Caiphas, and that he and some others were driven on by the fear that the influence of our Lord with the people would lead to a rising against the Roman power, which would certainly be suppressed by force, and lead to the extinction of their national existence. St. John adds that 'from that day they devised to put Him to death.'

Later on, when the Pasch was at hand, the same Evangelist tells us that the Chief Priests and Pharisees had given a commandment, that if any man knew where He was, he should tell, that they might apprehend Him.⁵ This order amounted to a notice that information against Him would be

⁴ St. John xi. 49, 50.⁵ St. John xi. 56.

welcome to the authorities, but it does not go so far as the decision to which they now came. It throws much light on the state of things after the Procession of Palms, when our Lord was publicly showing Himself in the Temple, and teaching with more freedom and authority than He had ever shown before. Now they determine to proceed, as has been said, to His apprehension on the first opportunity, and it is reasonable to suppose that they began at once to put into shape their charges against Him, and to provide themselves with their false witnesses. It is clear that when Judas left the Cenacle, on the eve of our Lord's apprehension, it was already night, and they could not then have had much time to collect and instruct their witnesses, and make whatever preparations were necessary for His formal trial. This matter was probably committed to some few of them of the greatest experience, or who were the most eager in their hostility to our Lord, and probably Annas was one of these, as it was to him that our Lord, on His actual apprehension, was first taken. If the determination just mentioned was taken on the Wednesday, as has been supposed, it would not leave much time for the collection of the evidence before His apprehension. The truth seems to have been that the proceedings were hurried on by the unexpected offer of Judas to betray our Lord, as it remains quite certain that the Chief Priests were desirous of waiting till after the feast-day. We have now to consider shortly the history of the matter in the mind of Judas himself, who thus became the instrument of Providence, not only for the completion of the Divine design of the Death of our Blessed Lord for the redemption of the world, but also for that completion at the time prefixed in the

Eternal Counsels. The manner in which the enemies of our Lord were made to serve the arrangements of Providence, even in the most minute matters, and against their own will, all through His Passion, is continually forcing itself upon our notice.

We know very little of the character and history of the miserable Apostle, whose name has become a byword among Christians as that of the wickedest of men. There are not many souls of whose ultimate perdition we are certain, as it seems we must be of that of Judas, and no one ever had the occasion of committing a crime like his. And yet we have already seen that he was not bad from the first, that our Lord's love rested on him, and entrusted to him some of His choicest gifts. When called to the Apostolate, there was no reason against his perseverance to the high graces belonging to that office. His ultimate ruin must have been his own work, although it was permitted, as our Lord said, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. The office which he held in the band of the Apostles laid him open to a certain amount of temptation, if he was unfaithful to grace. But we do not know that others in the same holy company were not tried by other temptations as seriously as Judas was by that of covetousness. A year before the time which we have now reached, our Lord could speak of him as 'a devil.' So that he must have been dead to grace within a few months, at all events within a year, of his choice by our Lord. During a part of this time he had been absent from His side, being sent out like the rest to preach with one companion. He must have been one, therefore, of the first Christian missionaries, and he may as such have worked miracles in our Lord's name as well as baptized and made converts to the faith.

The mention of his deplorable spiritual state by our Lord, soon after the great miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, is the only guide we have as to the history of his soul. But if he could then be spoken of as 'a devil,' it is easy to see what a miserable existence he must have led in the close following of our Lord, after that time, up to the date of his final determination to desert and betray Him. To a soul in an evil state, Heaven itself would be the greatest of torments, and yet Judas must have borne this torture for about a year. Perhaps his state was not always the same, but an alternation of falls and risings again.

We have the witness of St. John that 'he was a thief, and having the purse, carried the things that were put therein.' This the Evangelist says of him at the time of the supper at Bethany. It is commonly thought that we have here the key to his spiritual ruin, for St. John speaks of it as if he had a habit of pilfering from the common purse, which was in his custody, and as if he had reckoned on getting a large sum for the sale of the precious ointment, which St. Mary Magdalene seemed to him to be squandering by her act of loving devotion to our Lord.⁶ St. John's mention of this fault in Judas seems to justify us in attributing his fall to the indulgence of this evil habit, which would be a greater or less sin in him, according to what may have been his obligations as an Apostle to the practice of poverty. In any case it would have been a sin of covetousness and dishonesty. But it would be aggravated if he was bound to religious poverty,

⁶ For the sense of the Greek word *παρὰ*, which is used by St. John here and chapter xx. 15, as it seems, in the meaning of 'taking away,' see the former volume of this series, *Public Life*, vol. iv. (*The Preaching of the Beatitudes*, vol. i.) p. 57.

and if the money which he appropriated was consecrated by the fact that it was offered by the faithful to God to be distributed to the poor. But the indulgence of any habit of the kind must have gradually produced in him a state of soul quite inconsistent with the healthy life of grace and the love of God. This evil state was continually, it appears, made worse and worse, by the concealment which the practice required, while covetousness, if that was his great danger, would become more and more dominant in his soul, letting loose also and strengthening a number of other passions, in proportion to the growing weakness of the power of conscience and grace. Until his final despair, we see no trace in the short accounts we have of him, of any signs of disquiet or excitement in the external behaviour of Judas, except that he seems to have lost his self-control when he broke out in his censure of Magdalene, on account, as it seems, of a sudden and sharp disappointment. It does not appear that Judas was remarkably irascible or censorious, and his fall on occasion of the act of Magdalene is an instance of how some unexpected incident may be the occasion of a great ruin in a soul when the vigour of spiritual life has died away. It is, however, very significant that it should have been an accidental occasion of fault-finding and want of charity that brought about the final catastrophe in the traitor. Judas had the courage to ask our Lord at the Last Supper, 'Lord, is it I?' as well as the other Apostles, and he showed no flinching in the Garden, in giving our Lord the kiss. Thus he seems to have been callous all through, until Satan, as he does with his dupes, plied him so soon afterwards with terrible temptations to despair and suicide.

We may see in Judas an instance of what St. Paul calls a 'seared conscience,' by which he seems to mean a conscience which has lost all its power of perception, as a limb which has been cauterized, and which is reduced to the state of insensibility, by the continual and habitual disregard of its dictates and remonstrances. Nothing but a special miracle of Divine grace can awaken a man in such a state, which is like that of the wicked Gentiles of whom St. Paul speaks, 'having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God,' the life according to that law of God which they have it in their power to know and to follow, 'through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts, who despairing, have given themselves to lasciviousness, unto the working of all uncleanness, unto covetousness.'⁷ That an Apostle could come unto such a state of conscience, and remain to appearance like the rest of his brethren, may well make any Christian tremble. But the hardening and blinding process may go on under any circumstances of external life, and all that is necessary for it is that the conscience should be habitually neglected and disobeyed, though the subject-matter of the indulgence, for the sake of which it is so disobeyed, may be as various as possible in various cases, and all things may continue to outward eyes very much as they were before the dying away of the spiritual health began. Thus the life of the miserable soul in which the process takes place, may be led in the full blaze of Christian truth and even in the sanctuary itself, as well as in the comparative darkness of

⁷ Ephes. iv. 18. It is doubtful whether the word here translated 'covetousness,' — *πλεονεξία* — is not more general in its meaning, including all irregular desires.

those who, like those of whom St. Paul speaks, had little to guide them but the light of the natural law. It is the habitual neglect of the light that men have, whatever that light may be, which ruins them, and against this they are safe nowhere.

'Then went one of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, to the Chief Priests and said to them, What will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? He went and discoursed with the Chief Priests and magistrates how he might betray Him unto them. Who were glad, and promised they would give him money. And they appointed unto him thirty pieces of silver. And he promised. And he sought opportunity to betray Him in the absence of the multitude.' The words in St. Matthew when he says, 'They appointed unto him thirty pieces of silver,' are almost directly quoted from the prophecy of Zacharias,⁸ and show us how careful this Evangelist is to recognize any fulfilment of prophetic anticipation in the history of our Lord. St. Matthew reserves the full quotation of the prophecies of Zacharias and Jeremias until he comes, later on, to relate the final disposition of these 'thirty pieces' after the death of Judas.⁹ As has been said, the time at which Judas made his application to the Chief Priests, is not quite certainly fixed, but it is reasonable to think that it was after the Council had been held concerning our Lord's apprehension. They do not seem to have insisted with Judas upon any delay till after the festival. His offer to betray our Lord came to them as a most unexpected and unhopèd-for help to the execution of their design. Judas, probably, could not afford to wait, at least he could not do so with safety. Persons in his position are naturally

⁸ Zacharias xi. 12.

⁹ St. Matt. xxvii. 9.

suspicious. He might easily have thought that he was already suspected by some of his brethren. In any case detection was likely, and he might have thought that he was not safe if it should transpire that he was the traitor.

Perhaps we may be sometimes inclined to marvel how it could have been possible for Judas to live among the Apostles, and not show what was in his mind, at least of disaffection and discontent. But if his fall shows us to what great danger any one may fall who lives carelessly even among the holiest, the want of suspicion on the part of the Apostles shows us how well they had been trained in the school of charity. After our Lord had given him the morsel at the Last Supper, and after he had been sent away with the words, 'What thou doest, do quickly!' St. John tells us that none of them understood the meaning of the words. They do not seem to have had an idea of what had been passing in his mind, though he had so long been dead to God, and living with them in the closest companionship and intimacy. It was not so much that he was a master in the art of hypocrisy, as that they were intent upon their own faults and shortcomings, had no time to criticize others, and no desire to speculate on their defects, and, above all, had learnt from our Lord Himself never to judge or think evil of one another. So we see reason rather to bless God for their guileless simplicity, than to wonder at their want of discernment.

CHAPTER II.

In the Cenacle.

St. Matt. xxvi. 17—20 ; St. Mark xiv. 12—17 ; St. Luke xxii. 7—14 ;
Story of the Gospels, § 150.

OUR Lord must have had many kind and devoted friends in Jerusalem, who would have been ready and anxious to receive Him and His companions at the feast of the Pasch. If the accounts which have come down to us of the numbers of pilgrims who assembled at the Holy City on such occasions be at all accurate, the demands made on the hospitality of its inhabitants must have been very great. We have a hint given to us of the immense influx from all parts of the Roman and Greek world in the account of the Day of Pentecost by St. Luke, at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, and it is probable that the visitors at the Pasch were even greater in number than at any other feast. Our Lord's company was a large one, even if we suppose that no others came with Him from Bethany but the Apostles. But there must have been many devout souls who would have been glad to be His hosts. The place, however, was not fixed upon, up to the last moment, probably for prudent reasons in our Lord's own breast. On the Thursday morning, or perhaps on the evening before, 'the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Pasch?' It is St. Matthew who

tells us this. St. Mark adds that it was the day on which they sacrificed the Pasch, and St. Luke says that it was 'when it was necessary for the Pasch to be killed,' that is the Paschal Lamb. But this holy Evangelist tells the story with a little variation, making our Lord take the initiative by saying to St. Peter and St. John, 'Go and prepare for us the Pasch that we may eat. But they said, Where wilt Thou that we prepare?' It is of course easy to suppose that our Lord first spoke, and then they asked Him where it was to be.

'But He said to them, Go ye into the city, behold, as you go into the city, there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him, and whithersoever he shall go in, say to the master of the house, the Master saith, My time is near at hand, with thee I make the Pasch with My disciples. Where is My refectory, where I may eat the Pasch with My disciples? And he will show you a large dining-room furnished, and there prepare ye for us. And the disciples went their way and came into the city, and they found as He had told them, and they prepared the Pasch, and when evening was come, He cometh with the Twelve, and He sat down with the Twelve.' We owe the history of the manner in which the two Apostles found their way to the exact spot, to St. Mark and St. Luke.

It has already been said that the circumstances seem to have been carefully arranged by our Lord. It is a very probable conjecture that our Lord deliberately kept back, until the last moment, all knowledge of the place at which He meant to keep the Pasch for the disciples, as well as from the happy person whom He had chosen to be the host of Himself and His company, in order that no one

might be able to prevent His having undisturbed the few hours during which He was to be in the Cenacle, before leaving it for the Garden of Gethsemani. The Cenacle was to be like Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre, consecrated for ever by the Sacred Mysteries which took place therein. For it was here that our Lord instituted the Blessed Sacrament and the Adorable Sacrifice, it was here that He held that long converse and discourse with His Apostles before He suffered, of which St. John has been the historian, and here also that He uttered that long and most Divine prayer to His Eternal Father, which the same Evangelist has preserved. It is very likely also that this was the place where the disciples were collected 'for fear of the Jews,' when He appeared to them on the evening of the day on which He rose from the dead. Indeed, this spot seems to be connected with a long list of events most dear to the memories of Christians. It may have been the place of abode of our Blessed Lady, the place of the assemblage of the disciples during the interval between the Ascension and the Day of Pentecost, the place where the Holy Ghost descended upon them, and the scene of numberless other occurrences which belong to the early history of the Church.

The blessed owner of the place seems to have been prepared in some Divine way for the message of our Lord, but it was in the designs of God that the spot should be unknown to Judas, as to the rest of the Apostles, until the time came. Thus any treason on his part was prevented until our Lord gave him leave, as we may say, to depart from His company. Perhaps the host had prepared the room in some hope that our Lord might accept his hospi-

tality if it were offered, or he may have got his room ready, not knowing to what use it was to be put, and prompted by an interior inspiration. That he was a disciple is fairly concluded from the words which the Apostles were instructed to address to him, 'The Master saith,' and doubtless some gracious influence came over his soul at the time, making him offer his room willingly even if he did not already guess Who the Master was and what He wanted of him. The disciples were instructed to prepare what was necessary for the Paschal Supper, and this would include the lamb, as well as the herbs and other things that were to be eaten with it. The lamb, if it was the day on which it was to be slain, and if it was necessary that it should be slain by the priests in the Temple, would have to be bought and taken to them. A great many other preparations were clearly necessary, for there was the ordinary supper to be provided also, as well as anything which our Lord may have required for what He was to do that evening, including the washing of the feet of the disciples, the institution of the Holy Eucharist, and the like.

It is most likely that the house was the house of a friend, well known to the holy company, and that the secrecy observed before the time came was only out of precaution. Our Lord had only been present at this feast twice before in the course of His Ministry. On the two first occasions some of the Apostles may have been with Him, but the whole band had not yet been collected. At the third Pasch during His Ministry He was not present.¹ There was reason, therefore, for the inquiry of the disciples,

¹ St. John vi. 4. Our Lord did not leave Galilee till the feast of Tabernacles. See St. John vii. 3.

and our Lord does not seem to have had any fixed abode within the city. There was a friendly home always ready for Him at Bethany, and tradition says also that the little farm at Gethsemani belonged to our Lady's family. That was outside the city, and therefore would hardly be chosen as the place for the celebration of the feast. Gethsemani was to be consecrated by our Lord's Prayer and Agony.

As we find our Blessed Lady at the foot of the Cross on the next day after this, it is but natural to think that she spent at least the night of Thursday in Jerusalem. It is indeed most probable that she was never, during this visit to the Holy City, separated for long from our Lord, except when He was engaged in public teaching. She would also be accompanied by the other holy women, mention of whom is made in the Gospel accounts as having followed Him in this His last ascent to Jerusalem. The mere silence of the Evangelists as to their close companionship to our Lord and the Apostles on this evening would not be an argument of much weight for concluding that they were absent, at least from the near neighbourhood of the holy company. It may fairly be supposed that our Lord's followers generally included some such number of persons as that mentioned by St. Luke as collected in the Cenacle after the Ascension,² when he first mentions the eleven Apostles, and then says, 'All these were persevering with one mind in prayer with the women, and Mary the Mother of Jesus, and His brethren,' and he mentions that there were 'about a hundred and twenty' assembled when the election of St. Mathias took place. It is not necessary to suppose that so many were assembled in or near the neigh-

² Acts i.

bourhood of the place when the Last Supper was celebrated, but there is no reason in concluding that none but the Apostles were with our Lord. The Christian imagination is therefore free to suppose, on this subject, whatever is in harmony with reason and our Lord's usual habits.

It is well known that an immense amount of learning and ingenuity has been expended by Christian writers on another and a more difficult question connected with the proceedings in the Cenacle on this Thursday evening. The question to which we refer could hardly be avoided by writers who reverence the statements of the Evangelists on the very important point of the Supper which was then celebrated by our Lord and His Apostles, and who consider how highly that Supper must be ranked among the chief events of His earthly sojourn. It is impossible to do full justice to all that has been written on the subject, the literature of which is so extremely voluminous. It must be our endeavour to explain what the questions that have been raised are, and our especial object will be to treat the matter chiefly as it regards the accounts of the several Evangelists, and with a view of showing their complete harmony among themselves.

The state of the case is as follows. If we had only the narratives of the three earlier Evangelists to guide us, we should probably see no difficulty at all in concluding that the Paschal Lamb was eaten by our Lord and His Apostles on the evening of the day before that on which He suffered, that is, of the Thursday in Holy Week, and also that was the time on which the same celebration took place everywhere in Jerusalem. It is not, however, that the Evangelists in question state in so many words that

this was the case. But they state it virtually, as it seems, by the way in which they speak of the arrival of the day on which the Pasch was to be slain, and by the words of our Lord recorded by them, which have reference to the Paschal festival. They write as if it was to be assumed that that evening was the proper time for the lamb to be eaten, that our Lord then ate it, and that in this He was conforming Himself to the general practice, even though, when the question is raised, they may seem to furnish hints that imply the contrary.

But it must be remembered also, in reference to this matter, that the narrative with regard to the Paschal Supper, taken by itself, is very short in all the three first Evangelists. All that St. Matthew gives us, concerning the whole time that passed in the Cenacle on that evening, is contained in exactly ten verses. He says that when the evening was come, our Lord sat down with the twelve disciples. Then he occupies four verses with the words in which our Lord spoke of the coming treason of Judas, 'Whilst they were eating,' and the questions of the Apostles, 'Lord, is it I?' and it is remarkable that it is St. Matthew, and he alone, who has recorded that Judas himself asked the question with the rest, and that our Lord answered him, 'Thou hast said.' Then St. Matthew gives four more verses to the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, and then he passes to the exit of the whole company, after having 'sung the hymn,' to the Mount of Olives. This is St. Matthew's contribution to the history. St. Mark follows him exactly, only that his account is still shorter, and that he omits the question of Judas to our Lord, and our Lord's answer.³

³ St. Matt. xxvi. 21--29; St. Mark xiv. 18--25.

It was in this state, therefore, that the written history of the events of this most memorable evening was left till the Evangelist St. Luke took it up. As has often been said in the course of these volumes, it is the manner of St. Luke generally to give the history with a certain amount of completeness and order, and at the same time not to mention, without necessity, what has been already related by his two predecessors, although there are of course many things which had been related before him, which he could not avoid mentioning in a narrative that aimed at completeness. Ordinarily, when St. Luke can add to the history by relating a miracle or an anecdote which has not been mentioned, he prefers doing this to relating over again another which has. If we turn to the narrative before us, we find that St. Luke is longer than either St. Matthew or St. Mark has been, but that he follows the general line of their narratives. He makes one very significant addition at the very beginning of his account of this evening. For he says that our Lord spoke the words, 'With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer, for I say unto you, that from this time I will not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God'—words very like others, placed by his two predecessors after the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. He must have added these words for some grave reason. St. Luke adds several more details of what occurred at what we call the Last Supper, such as the contention as to who was the greatest, and the words of our Lord in which He seemed to recall the command which He had given, when He first sent the Apostles out to preach, about the practice of poverty. But it is quite clear that St. Luke does not attempt to give anything like a

complete history of what passed. He seems merely to throw in a few details, and as it appears, without any order of time, which could hardly have been drawn out unless the connection between the few incidents mentioned had been made evident. This accounts for some difficulties which have been raised as to some of his words, as we shall hereafter see.⁴ What has been said may suffice to show that the three first Evangelists do not go into the events of this Thursday evening with anything like copiousness of detail, and that they are, in this respect, in singular contrast to St. John, of whom we shall presently have to speak. St. Matthew was, of course, present the whole time in the Cenacle. We may imagine that any negative evidence that may be brought from their narratives in the way of explanation of the account of St. John can hardly have the same weight, as might have been due to it if they had been guided by the Divine Author of the whole of Scripture to be more large in this part of their story.

On the other hand, the space devoted to the Passion and all that relates to it by St. John is a very large portion indeed of his whole work.⁵ He too, like St. Luke, very carefully avoids repeating without necessity what has been related by others, and this accounts for many great omissions in his Gospel, and even in this part of it. But St. John has a claim to be considered the principal historian of that wonderful mystery. What is meant by this is, that the history of the Sacred Passion would be most imperfect without St. John, although a large part of what he has told us concerning it is entirely supplementary and altogether unmentioned by the Evangelists who wrote before him. This remark

⁴ St. Luke xxii. 14—22.

⁵ St. John xiii.—xvii.

applies especially to all that passed in the Cenacle. The whole of the Gospel of St. John, from the beginning of the thirteenth chapter to the end of the seventeenth, is devoted to this part of the sacred history. Thus his contribution to the narrative is five or six times as long as that of all the others put together. It is not wonderful that so large an amount of supplement should contain so much of what we might not have been prepared for by the former narrators, and that there should be some things which seem to explain them in such a way as to remove false impressions which might have had their source in the brevity with which they have spoken. This is all that can ever be said by any writer who believes in the perfect truthfulness of every single line that was ever written by any one of the four.

It is extremely necessary to remind ourselves at the outset, that—considering the peculiar manner in which St. John has been chosen to instruct us in the details of this history, and also the fact that he wrote last of all, and, as is evident, with a perfect acquaintance of what had been written by the others—it must be quite certain that in the case of any apparent discrepancy between him and them, a sound criticism will be inclined rather to understand their statements in accordance with his, than to strive to twist violently his statements into accordance with what may seem to be theirs, before his are considered. For St. John would never have been willing to assert anything in apparent contradiction to their statements, whereas it is conceivable that if they had written later than he, they might have stated some things more clearly, for the express purpose of not even seeming in the least to oppose him. As it is, what-

ever they may have said which apparently differs from him, must have been said without consciousness on their part of what he was to say after them. Whereas with him, if there is any apparent opposition, the language he uses must have been chosen with full knowledge of the seeming discrepancy, and with an intention of cautioning their readers against a misunderstanding.

It is not superfluous to say this. Many of the best Catholic critics, in arguing about these difficulties, treat the statements of the four Evangelists as if they were four utterly independent witnesses speaking each without reference to what has been said by another, and as if their statements, at least the statements of those who wrote last, could not have been made with this distinct and deliberate intention of adding to and explaining what had been said before. The truth is, the Gospels come from one Divine Author, are not written, even by their human authors, without a common certainty of information, and there is a beautiful order about the gradual publication, so to call it, of the Gospel history and the story of the Passion. Some things were to be said at an earlier stage in the general revelation, some were to be reserved for a later stage, and the later imparting of knowledge might sometimes seem to correct the former. Not that the earlier Evangelists, much less the Holy Ghost Who guided them, did not know the whole, but that the little that they first were guided to tell was to be better understood in the light of the later communications. It is absurd to suppose that St. Matthew did not know of the miracle of Lazarus and its effect upon the minds of the Jews and in bringing about the Passion. No one can suppose

that he did not know all the Words on the Cross, or that our Blessed Lady stood at its foot, or that our Lord's side was pierced by the lance, into the wound made by which he himself saw St. Thomas put his hand. But these things were not inserted in the earlier accounts for many good reasons, and for the best of all—because the Holy Ghost, the Divine Author of whatever has come to us in Sacred Scripture from Prophet, Apostle, or Evangelist, reserved certain things to be recorded at the time at which they were so, and not before, exercising His own wisdom and power as to the time in the history of the Church when they were to be committed to the Gospel records, as well as the person who was to make them known.

We have, therefore, good reason for considering that the statements of St. John have the inestimable value for the Church which belongs to the latest and most explicit declaration by the Holy Ghost, the Divine Author of the whole Gospel history as it is given us in the New Testament, neither superseding nor invalidating what had been said before on the same authority, but explaining and confirming it, and, if need be, guarding it from any erroneous interpretation. Now the phenomenon which meets the investigator of this history is, that when he takes in his hand the Gospel of St. John, especially with regard to the full narrative of the Sacred Passion, he finds himself, it may be said, constantly confronted by statements which add very largely to his knowledge as to what may be called the springs of action, the motive causes of much which he knew before, but which he had not before had so fully explained to him. These things have had to be pointed out, as the history has proceeded, such as the effect of the

raising of Lazarus, the reason which made Judas angry at the devotional act of Magdalene, some of the motives of policy guiding the High Priests in their opposition to our Lord, the secret feeling that prevailed among many of the principal men in His favour, and the like. As the history proceeds to the Passion itself we shall find these new indications multiply.

Particularly with regard to the proceedings in the Cenacle on this Thursday evening, St. John is more than ever communicative of new facts. We owe to him our knowledge of the incident of the washing of the disciples' feet by our Lord, the question asked by St. John at the instigation of St. Peter about the traitor, the giving of the sop to him by our Lord, and his immediate exit from the Cenacle. This last is a fact which had not been mentioned before, yet which was required for the explanation of the history, for the separation of Judas from the other Apostles is otherwise not accounted for. This fact, when put in its proper place in an arrangement of the Harmony, enables us to see that Judas was almost certainly absent from the institution of the Holy Eucharist. St. John does not directly mention the institution itself, for it had been stated by the other three, but he adds the inestimable narrative of the long discourse of our Lord after the supper, and also the most precious prayer of our Lord to His Father for the Catholic Church. But we are not obliged here to enumerate the additions made by St. John to our knowledge, and it will be enough to pause, in our enumeration, at the point of the exit from the Cenacle.

What we have at present to remark, is that St. John begins at the very outset of his story to mention

one thing after another which seems inconsistent with the opinion that the evening of which he is speaking was the evening on which it was in accordance with the recognized custom and law to celebrate the Paschal Supper. This opinion, as has been said, certainly seems most in harmony with the accounts of the other Evangelists, although it can hardly be said to be directly affirmed by them as true. Thus, when the great commentator Toletus, who maintains, as do so many others, that the day on which our Lord ate the Pasch was the proper day on which the Paschal Lamb was to be eaten, sets himself to answer the objections to this view which are founded, at least mainly, on the language of St. John, he has thus to meet at least seven.⁶ He certainly does this with great ability, so that a reader of his note on the subject might very fairly say that they had all had some answer, though he might still have to acknowledge to himself that as the arguments are chiefly presumptive, the general effect of the accumulation of so much evidence still remains. For the tendency of the language of St. John is uniform, it cannot have been chosen by him without a purpose, although it may be a question what is the precise conclusion that the Blessed Evangelist was guided to suggest to us in using it. Now the testimony of a chain of facts of a tendency uniform in one direction, and when there has been an obvious purpose in the writer who puts it forward, is not invalidated as such by a series of answers, however ingenious, to some, or even to many, of the facts adduced.

It would be too long an undertaking to go through these arguments one by one, as has been said, but

⁶ See Toletus in *Joan.* xiii. annot. 5.

they can be noticed as they arise in the narrative before us. It will be enough to give a general idea of them if we mention a few. Thus St. John begins his account of the Last Supper by the well-known words in which he says that it was 'before the feast of the Pasch that having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.' When further on he mentions the exit of Judas from the Cenacle, he says that the Apostles thought that our Lord had told him to buy some of the things that were wanted for the feast. He calls the day of the Crucifixion 'the Preparation of the Pasch.' He says that the Chief Priests would not enter Pilate's Pretorium for fear of defilement, 'that they might eat the Pasch.' He speaks of the proposal to set our Lord or Barabbas free, as if the feast had not yet come with which it was connected. He speaks of the Sabbath that followed on the day of the Crucifixion as being one of especial solemnity, and seemingly, not an ordinary Sabbath. Both St. John and the other Evangelists mention many things as done by the Jews on the day of Crucifixion, which would have been forbidden by the Law if that day had been the day of the feast. Nicodemus also, and Joseph of Arimathea, make their preparations for the entombment as if there was no feast-day to prevent them, and the same may be said of the holy women who buy spices and ointments before the Sabbath, that is the Saturday, sets in, and then rest on that day out of obedience to the Law. Now the day on which the feast of the Pasch fell was kept as a strict Sabbath.

These are specimens of the kind of arguments which have to be overcome by those who maintain that the Friday on which our Lord suffered was the feast-

day of the Pasch. It is noted also that St. John applies to our Lord the prophecy that no bone of the Lamb was to be broken at the Pasch, as having been fulfilled when the soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves crucified with Him, but not our Lord's, as if he wished to draw attention to the truth that the Paschal Lamb was being sacrificed at that very time. But if the Friday afternoon was the time for the sacrifice of the Lamb, it could not have been sacrificed on the Thursday evening before. At all events, it may seem a natural fulfilment of the types that our Lord should die on the Cross at the very time when the Paschal Lamb was sacrificed, which would not have been the case if the evening of the Last Supper had been the time when the Paschal Lamb was sacrificed.

These and other like difficulties, which are certainly most strongly supported by the narrative of St. John, have caused the division among learned men which exists on this subject. Some have gone so far as to deny that our Lord really ate the Paschal Lamb at all. Others have maintained that it is impossible to doubt that He ate it, that it is equally unlikely that the Jews did not eat it, and have therefore supposed that He ate it at a different time from the Jews. There has always been a third and very authoritative set of writers who have held that, notwithstanding all the difficulties, our Lord and the Jews both ate the Pasch at the same time, that is, on the Thursday evening. It is not a matter on which the Church has absolutely decided, and very great names can be quoted for either of the three opinions which have been mentioned. We may say a few words as to each, without entering at full length on the discussion.

Although we could not condemn as absolutely untenable the opinion which denies that our Lord ate the Pasch on the occasion of His death, that opinion seems yet to sound so strange to Christian ears that it is natural to shrink from it with something of repugnance. If it were a question of the manner in which we are to make our way out of a common historical difficulty, we should not be startled by being invited to admit a conclusion contrary to the general traditions that have come down to us in the society in which we live, if only that conclusion presented itself with a fairly specious appearance of probability, although lacking in authority. It is not quite the same when we have to deal with an important feature in our Lord's life, which is constantly before our minds, and which has woven itself into our habits of thought concerning Him. We receive it with a certain antecedent unwillingness.

The opinion that we are discussing, that our Lord did not eat the legal supper on the night of His betrayal, is undoubtedly found in some very early Christian writers. Unless we suppose, which is unlikely, that the Christians of the first age were narrowly critical on the points of what we now call the science of the Harmony of the Gospels, we must suppose that there were in those early times some varying traditions on the point before us. The Christian writers seem to have considered that the symbolism of the Lamb as a figure of the Sacrifice of the Passion almost required that our Lord should have suffered at the same time that the victim which represented Him was slain. Carrying on this idea, Justin Martyr says that the two skewers with which the body of the lamb was transfixed represented the Cross, and that our Lord was delivered up and slain

on the feast-day of the Pasch. Tertullian says much the same, and says the whole congregation of the children of Israel slew Him when they cried out against Him to Pilate demanding His death. Clement of Alexandria says that our Lord allowed the disciples to prepare for the feast, but that He died on the following day, sacrificed by the Jews. He also speaks of the Resurrection on the third day from the Friday as a fulfilment of the typical offering of the first-fruits of the harvest on that day, which it would not have been if the Pasch had been sacrificed on the Thursday evening. He says that in former years our Lord eat of the Pasch, but that this year He was Himself the Pasch. Much the same thing is said by Apollinarius of Hierapolis, and by Hippolytus of Porto.⁷ These passages seem to represent a certain line of opinion in the early Church, which is quite in accordance with the passage in the Epistle to the Corinthians,⁸ in which St. Paul speaks of 'Christ our Pasch' being sacrificed, and uses the image of the purging away the old leaven, the leaven of malice and wickedness, and the unleavened bread of 'sincerity and truth'—the passage which has been adopted, as we all know, in the liturgical Offices of the Church. If these early Christians wished to take in the most literal manner the correspondence between the type and the antitype in this case, there is reason enough in their language, although it may not have been historically accurate in all particulars. It must be remembered also that the practice of the Asiatic Churches as to the celebration of Easter, about which there was so much controversy in early

⁷ The references are taken from Mr. Greswell's *Dissertations on the Harmony of the Gospels*, vol. iii. pp. 168, 169.

⁸ 1 Cor. v. 7.

times, may possibly be connected with the question before us, although it would take too long for us to enter into this discussion here. It would be very interesting to know for certain more about the practice of the Church of Jerusalem under St. James, but unhappily the vestiges of the traditions of that Church are almost entirely wanting.

There are further traces of the opinion that our Lord did not eat the Paschal Supper on the night of His betrayal, in the practice of the Greeks to consecrate the Holy Eucharist with leavened bread. For they assert that our Lord did so on this night, the time for the removal of all the leaven from the houses not having yet come. We find the not very high authority of Philoponus in the seventh century for the opinion about the Pasch which we are discussing. We have then to pass over many centuries before the controversy was practically revived. At the close of the sixteenth century we find that it was maintained by a certain Florentine named Vecchietti that our Lord did not eat the Pasch, and that his book was condemned by the Holy Office, and he himself imprisoned. In the next century the same opinion was maintained by Antonio de Dominis, the apostate Archbishop of Spalatro, whose advocacy was not of a kind to commend it to the Catholic world. Towards the end of the seventeenth century it was put forward again by the learned Father Tournemine of the Society of Jesus, and by his contemporary Father Lamy of the French Oratory, a writer of great learning and industry on the Harmony of the Gospels. Since that time the question cannot be said to have been decisively settled, at least if it is considered as a simple matter of criticism, and without regard to other

considerations which ought to have their weight with Catholic writers.

But in a question which affects a feature in our Lord's life, the importance of which is reflected in the way in which the Evangelists and Apostles speak of it, it is natural that Catholic and Christian critics should acknowledge that there are other considerations which ought to affect their judgment. In doing this they do not depart from the principles of their science, they simply recognize the existence of those principles with a clearer insight than belongs to that science on its ordinary field of action. One great presumption against the theory now before us is that it leaves unexplained the language of the three Evangelists who, to say the least, leave us under the impression that our Lord partook of the supper which the two Apostles, sent by Him for the purpose, prepared in the house to which He directed them, and that that supper was their Pasch for that year. There is a difficulty before us when we compare the words of the three first Evangelists with those of St. John, for they seem to affirm that our Lord ate of the Pasch, and St. John seems not only to affirm, but to insist upon our noticing, not that our Lord did not eat of the Pasch, but that the Jews had not eaten it when they crucified Him. These two propositions may seem to be contradictory or inconsistent. Are they so in truth?

Even in the case of common witnesses of credit we should surely hesitate to say that there was a necessary contradiction or inconsistency, unless we were quite sure that we knew all the facts of the case, and all the conditions which might modify general rules concerning the celebration of the Paschal feast on particular occasions. This would be in accordance

with the legitimate principles of the art of criticism, if we were dealing with ordinary witnesses. But it is surely most unreasonable and foolish for Christian critics, dealing with the Sacred Evangelists, and with documents which are to be attributed to the Holy Ghost as their Divine Author, to set aside in the slightest degree the natural and obvious impression which is produced by the three first Evangelists as to the fact of our Lord's having eaten the Pasch, because we seem to ourselves to find difficulties in reconciling this statement with the other made by St. John, which, as has been said, amounts to this, that the Jews had not celebrated their Paschal Supper when our Lord was being judged and ultimately crucified by them. Each statement has for it the human authority of one who was present at the scene in the Cenacle, to say nothing of the authority of St. Mark, which amounts to that of St. Peter, and St. Luke's, which may be considered as that of St. Paul. The natural and legitimate conclusion on critical grounds, even independent of the peculiar grounds which must be respected by Christian criticism, must be received as the nearest to the truth that we are able to arrive at. This must be done especially in a case the facts of which are so obscure. It is unreasonable to assume a difficulty to be insoluble, because we may not see how it is to be solved.

It is for nearly the same reason as that on which we decline to accept the theory that our Lord did not eat of the Paschal Lamb on the Thursday evening, that we also decline to admit the other theory, of those writers in the modern Church, who set aside what is the apparent and repeated meaning of the fourth Evangelist, the blessed St. John,

who seems to tell us so plainly that the Jews had not eaten their Pasch on the Friday morning. It would be enough, as we say, for Christian critics to acknowledge that they do not see clearly the solution of the difficulty, but that they are sure that there must be a solution. It is enough for Christian critics that they have the two statements secured by the authority of the Evangelists, although there is a difficulty left about the reconciliation of the statements in our present state of imperfect knowledge. Nevertheless, we are very thankful to the band of very learned men, including the great names of Petavius, Maldonatus, Jansenius of Ghent, and others, down to our own time, both among Catholics and Protestants, who have endeavoured to find the way to the explanation of the difficulty. They may differ among themselves, and there may be something to be said against the various solutions which they have suggested. That was only to be expected, and it remains merely a matter of choice between the several answers which may be given to the question.

Individual minds are certain to be impressed, the one more by one argument and the other by another, and by one objection more than by another. The whole question would require for its perfect elucidation the undoubtedly accurate knowledge of the original prescriptions given by Moses on the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, the manner in which those prescriptions had been observed down to the time of our Lord, whether with or without modifications, the manner in which the Jewish feast-days and solemnities were observed, at what hour they began and at what hour they ended, whether there were any relaxations of the

strict law in point of the time when a solemnity like that of the Pasch began and how long it might be extended, whether or not there was a change of the day on which the Jews kept the Pasch if it fell naturally on a Friday, that is, the day before a Sabbath, and a great number of like matters. We cannot but be struck with a kind of temerity in those writers who take the words of the legal prescriptions as decisive of the facts of our Lord's time. For it seems almost certain that in the lapse of so many centuries there must have been customs introduced which may have had the force of law, with which the Evangelists and those for whom they immediately wrote must have been perfectly familiar, but of which we know nothing. The Catholic ritual is carefully observed by all priests throughout the world, and yet any one who without personal instruction were to undertake to say Mass or recite the Breviary would often fall into blunders, from practical ignorance of what is usually done.

We are far from saying that a clear explanation of all the questions which may be asked, and all the difficulties that may be raised on this point, is forthcoming, or will ever be found. But it is quite possible greatly to overrate the importance of our finding a perfectly clear solution. The difficulty is certainly not one to which we have a right to expect a perfect answer from the last Evangelist, to whose narrative we owe in some degree its existence. There is little difficulty to a Christian mind in the easy solution which is found in the supposition that our Lord acted in this matter, as in others, on His own authority, and anticipated, as His words in St. Luke to some degree prepare us for thinking, the exact time on which the feast normally began. He could

act on His own authority on the question of the Sabbath, and we find no word about the change made in His name by the Church, in the Gospels or Acts. We find no blame assigned to what was done in the reign of Ezechias, on account of a necessity of the time, when the Pasch was transposed from the proper date by a whole month. In this case there was nothing that met the eyes of men, and so could occasion scandal. It was but the anticipation by a few hours, for a Divine and very great purpose, of the celebration of the Paschal Supper in a single household. There are some minds which will be very much startled at the suggestion. But it seems to us far less difficult to accept than the supposition of a real discrepancy between the Evangelists, on a point moreover as to which, if they only be well-informed and honest and truthful narrators, it is impossible to suppose a mistake. Let us see, however, what the learned men who have written on the subject can say in explanation of the difficulty.

Petavius thinks that the Jews kept the Pasch as well as our Lord, but on a different day, our Lord adhering to the right day and they transferring it. Maldonatus thinks that the Jews did this on account of a rule which had come into use after the return from the Babylonian captivity, that, whenever the day of the Pasch fell on a Friday, it was lawful to transfer it to the Saturday, and that this was what the Jews did on the occasion of which we are speaking.⁹ He quotes Paulus Burgensis, as stating that he had ascertained from the Jewish calendars that in the year of the Crucifixion, the Pasch fell on the Friday, and therefore would have been transferred,

⁹ Petavius in *Doctrin. Temp.* l. xii. c. 15, seq.; Maldonatus in Matt. xxvi. See also Jansen Gandar. in *Concordia*, c. cxxviii.

our Lord keeping it on the proper day and the Jews in general on the day after. Another way of solving the difficulty is put forward in an ingenious treatise by the celebrated Spanish Augustinian, Luis de Leon. This is found in the *Raccolta di Dissertazioni di Storia Ecclesiastica* of the very learned Antonio Zaccaria,¹⁰ with a letter of Father Tournemine to Onorato a Sancta Maria, and an introduction by Father Gabriel Daniel, in which that distinguished authority speaks of it very favourably. Father Hardouin is mentioned by Zaccaria as maintaining that the Galilæans celebrated their Pasch the day before the Jews, and his opinion has found much favour with some. Zaccaria also mentions another system, according to which there were two opposite parties among the Jews as to the celebration, and that our Lord followed one and the greater part of the Jews the other. Any of these theories may be true, without our being able to prove it so. One thing seems certain, that if such a theory were true, the facts of the Pasch at which our Lord died would have been mentioned quite simply by the Evangelists, as not requiring any explanation. It would be quite inconsistent with their plan, or their usual methods, to explain what everybody knew at the time. This is enough to show that the explanation of the apparent discrepancy between the Evangelists by the existence of a real diversity of practice among the Jews of the time, does not lack supporters among learned men any more than it lacks inherent proba-

¹⁰ T. ii. The letter of Father de Tournemine is the fifth dissertation in this volume, the answer of Father Onorato is the sixth, and the translation of the system of Luis de Leon, by Father Daniel, is the seventh. Father Daniel's remarks have also been printed in the third volume of his *Dissertations* (Paris, 1724), which contains also his dissertation on the *Discipline of the Quartodecimans*.

bility. At the same time it has the obvious advantage of enabling us to understand, in their simple and obvious sense, the words of the inspired historians. No one will fairly object to it on the ground that the Evangelists might have told us more than they have told us of the reasons for the difference of practice, or of the motives which guided our Lord in acting as He did.

It is of course possible that the earliest Evangelist, writing for a community mainly composed of converts of the circumcision, may have had some special motive of prudence to prevent him from mentioning anything which was abnormal in the conduct of our Lord on that evening, and which might give offence to the Jews. The readers for whom St. Matthew wrote, if we are not rather to say, the teachers for whom he compiled his Gospel, would certainly not have expected explanation of such a fact, not prominent in the story. St. Matthew's mind was probably too full of the pre-eminent and overflowing graces of the Christian sacraments to find time to dwell on the sacred rites of the Jews otherwise than as having been fulfilled in the sacraments of the Church. And he singles out the institution of the Blessed Eucharist as almost the only thing which he records of the many wonderful mysteries of the Cenacle. The Pasch was dead and gone to St. Matthew and the Apostles, and the fulfilment of its typical meaning had taken place in the Sacrifice of the Cross on Friday, rather than in the commemorative meal on the Thursday evening. This is what St. Paul brings out so grandly in the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning our Lord's Sacrifice. But we can hardly think that our Lord did not lovingly finish with the old figure before it was

fulfilled in the Kingdom of God, and indeed we seem to have His own word, as recorded by St. Luke, to tell us that it was so. We seem as if we should have lost something if it had not been so.

At the same time, there is a gain to us in the arrangement of the historian, and St. John's more full account setting it before us. For we thus see in the identity of the time at which the Paschal Lamb was sacrificed in the Temple with the moment of the completion of our Lord's Sacrifice on the Cross, a correspondence between type and antitype which would not otherwise have been observable. The moment of our Lord's death was the moment of the fulfilment of the figure by the Divine reality, the time of the rending of the veil of the Temple from the top to the bottom was the time at which the figure was laid aside for ever, and eternal redemption brought in, "not according to the law of a carnal commandment, but according to the power of an indissoluble life."¹¹ To point out, as St. John has done, that the Jews did not eat the Paschal Lamb on the Thursday evening, was in fact to point out that they were to eat it on the Friday evening, and that it was to be slain on the same afternoon, that is at the very time when our Lord's own Sacrifice was accomplished. This is in truth the same as to say that the sacrifice which had given whatever efficacy was possessed by the Mosaic rites, at the same time that it was itself to live on for ever in real, essential, and ever fresh efficacy in the Church, was to take place at the moment of the last Paschal offering of the Old Law, in the place where God had put His name during the earlier Covenant. We have no

¹¹ Hebrews vii. 16.

difficulty in believing that it was so, in the order of Providence, and in seeing in the narrative of St. John a silent though distinct intention on his part to bring this truth out for the Church.

CHAPTER III.

The Last Pasch.

St. John xiii. 1 ; St. Luke xxii. 15—18 ; *Story of the Gospels*, § 151.

WE are now able to proceed from the account of the various theories about the time of the celebration of the Last Pasch by our Lord and His disciples, to gather up the fragmentary though rich information which is given us as to the fact itself by the several Evangelists, with whatever supplementary notes may seem to have reached us from Christian tradition or the lawful workings of devout intelligence and reasonable conjecture as to this sacred history. The chief features of the evening of this Thursday have been enumerated elsewhere by the present writer,¹ and the mere enumeration of them is sufficient to show us both what a memorable cluster of incidents it is with which we have now to deal, and how necessary it is to begin by acknowledging to ourselves that, large as is the range which is occupied by the remnants which have come down to us, there is also a large range of subjects about which we may feel sure that they had a place of their own in the series of sayings and doings of this evening, but of which in their details we are not informed by the sacred historians.

¹ *Life of our Life*, vol. ii. p. 283 (1st Edit.).

Something has also been said already concerning the number of persons who were present, either at all the events of which we are now to speak, or at some, at least, of those events. The Evangelists have not been guided to specify to us the names of any but the twelve Apostles as having been present in the Cenacle, but their silence can be no conclusive argument of the fact. For the utmost reserve characterizes the Gospel narratives at this point, and as has been already remarked, that reserve was especially required with regard to the naming of persons, and also with regard to the earlier stages of the story of this great time. This may be partly accounted for by the fact that when the first Evangelist wrote, many of the actors were alive, and perhaps even dwelling at Jerusalem or in its neighbourhood. It must be remembered, also, that the contents of a Gospel like that of St. Matthew must have been very probably familiar topics in the common Christian instruction in days still earlier than the time when the Gospel was put together as a whole, because some formal collection was made requisite by the dispersion of those who had to use it for instruction of others.

In such cases it would be a matter of course to omit names, and hence the earlier Evangelists omit even the name of one so famous as St. Mary Magdalene, even at the point where they mention that universal fame in the Christian world was promised to her by our Lord for her devout action in anointing Him, and in their narratives of the action itself. We should hardly have had her name and that of the other holy women mentioned in the history of the Passion by them, if it had not been for the great part they played at the Resur-

rection. For it is not till the time comes for the mention of the entombment of our Lord that St. Matthew and St. Mark introduce their names. Nor would the name of our Lady herself have been known to us from the Gospel history as standing by the Cross if it had not been for St. John, the last of all to write. In truth, St. John is the one writer among them who is rich in giving us names. The first three Evangelists mention no one unless the person mentioned is necessary to the course of their short narrative. The whole history is what it is and no more, by the guidance of the Holy Ghost, Who chose what should be mentioned and what should not be mentioned, what be left to the Christian reason and the devout and dutiful imagination, and Who chose, too, what should be mentioned by each particular writer and what should be omitted by each, and Who intends the children of the Church to use their Christian privilege of reasoning and pondering on these things under His own blessed guidance, as our Blessed Lady used her mind and heart on the successive mysteries of the Incarnation and Life of our Lord.

It cannot be supposed that our Blessed Lady—of whose presence at the foot of the Cross we are only directly informed by the latest Evangelist, but who it is clear must have been in our Lord's company during the whole space of this visit to Jerusalem—could have been kept by Him in ignorance of the great things that He was to do and say and suffer during these greatest days of His earthly sojourn. She was the one among all around Him who understood most intimately His thoughts and intentions, and who had the most perfect knowledge communicated to her as to the accomplishment

of the counsels of God for the redemption of the world through His Sacrifice of Himself at that time. She accompanied Him step by step, taking that part in what was being done which belonged to her in the Divine plan. It is probable that she had become, long before this time, a kind of centre and guide to the number of holy women who were followers of our Lord, Magdalene and the rest, and, as we find them mentioned as present at the Crucifixion, they must have been at Jerusalem for the Pasch, and have kept the feast at the same time with our Lord and the Apostles, probably in the same house, though not in the same room, with the men. If this house was, as it is natural to conjecture, what is called later in the history the house of John Mark, it seems to have become a kind of centre for the Apostles and their companions and followers, and must therefore have been of some considerable size. There may have been ample room for the holy women and our Lady to keep the Pasch by themselves, and to be near at hand for any of the holy solemnities of the occasion which it was fit for them to have a share in. We therefore suppose that such was the case, and that our Blessed Lady and her companions were, as the contemplatives suggest, near our Lord all through the scenes of this evening. Some other disciples of our Lord may be supposed to have been in attendance, as tradition states.

When we endeavour to give to ourselves an account of the proceedings of this evening, it is natural to think that they must have begun some hours before the moment came when our Lord left the Cenacle finally, to pass the night, as usual, in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemani. The incidents

that occurred before this departure were of the highest possible importance in the unfolding of the divine succession of Christian mysteries, and it is most likely that they were explained by our Lord more fully than is related in the only narrative which we possess. But, it is also likely that few but the Apostles would receive these most intimate communications from Him, but that He had taken some earlier opportunity of informing on the same subjects, as far as was necessary, the one soul on earth who was the most capable of understanding them, appreciating His goodness and mercy therein, and of giving Him due thanks and praise for the wonders of grace and love which they involved. It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that before His last journey from Bethany to Jerusalem, He had spoken to His Blessed Mother more openly than before concerning the impending mysteries of the Thursday night and the Friday—more openly, certainly, to her than to any one among the disciples, in proportion to the height to which her intelligence had been raised, concerning which the Psalmist speaks of as the uncertain and hidden things of the wisdom of God. The contemplative² whom we have before used tells us that He now spoke, even to her, with a new royal dignity and gravity. He told her, she says, that the time was now come, when according to the decree of the Eternal Father that sacrifice of His human will, with which the sacrifice of her will also was bound up, was to be made, of which He had often spoken before. He asked her that her consent might accompany His own as He went to die and suffer for men. It was His Father's decree that He should give Himself into the hands of His

² *Maria de Agreda*, t. iii.

enemies, and by this accomplish the work of the redemption of mankind. She too as His Mother was to cooperate in His work, she in whose womb He had taken the Human Nature in the form of a man passible and mortal. Her consent had been asked and given for His Incarnation, let it now be given for His Passion, which had been the object and purpose of His Incarnation. As God had then conferred on her the inestimable grace of becoming His Mother, her will was now to be joined with His in making the sacrifice, in return and in gratitude for that insurpassable boon. Then that Blessed Mother, we are told, pierced to the heart with grief, nevertheless united with His the sacrifice of her will to the will of the Eternal Father, and begged to be allowed to share His Passion in what way she could be His companion therein. As she knew that before suffering He was about to institute the Adorable Sacrament of His Body and Blood, she now begged that she might be allowed to receive the same, and our Lord granted her request.

The statement here made about the Blessed Sacrament supposes that the great mystery of the Holy Eucharist, which had been promised by our Lord in the great discourse held in the synagogue of Capharnaum about a year before this time, had been a subject of conversation between our Lord and His Blessed Mother in the interval. It is worth while noticing this, which may at first sight seem somewhat strange, because it will show us, on reflection, the unreasonable ideas which are current, even among many good Christians, concerning the amount of our Lord's communication with His friends and Apostles—and surely, therefore, with His Blessed Mother—with regard to the great boons which were

to characterize His Kingdom. It will seem something at the least unauthorized to say that we assume for instance, that the Blessed Sacrament, which fills so large a part in the daily life and habitual thoughts of Christians now, was also frequently talked of and explained by our Lord in His unreserved intercourse with the Apostles and with His Mother. When we consider the closeness of the companionship between them, the importance of this subject, and the fewness of our Lord's words which have come down to us—for they are few indeed, not enough to fill up more than a week or so, out of the years of His Ministry—it will at least seem more rash to conclude that He never spoke a word more on the subjects dearest to His Heart than the few which are recorded, than that He spoke often and largely on such matters at times of which we have no record.

It is important for us to notice this, for we shall soon come to the narrative of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, about which it is most unreasonable to think that not a word passed from Him to the Apostles since the discourse in the synagogue of Capharnaum. On that occasion He had not laid down the doctrine in the manner which He might have adopted, if speaking freely among His friends and disciples. He was urging upon the Jews, His enemies, an unacceptable doctrine, not unfolding to those who loved Him and trusted Him the marvels of His mercy, the ineffable inventions of His love. Of this we may speak more presently. Now it is enough to say that there must naturally have been a large range of subjects, doctrinal and other, relating to the most important and fundamental truths of His Kingdom, as to which it is reasonable to suppose that our Blessed Lady and

the Apostles had received from Him a great amount of instruction and enlightenment, before the time which we have now reached. And indeed the manner in which the slight mention that is made of them in the narrative seems to hint to us that it was so, because our Lord seems to speak of them to the Apostles less as of things of which they were absolutely ignorant, than as of things for which they had been prepared beforehand.

The comparatively long conversation with the Apostles, on which we shall presently have to dwell, and for which we are exclusively indebted to the faithful memory of the last Evangelist, shows us the great danger of supposing that our Lord was not in the habit of pouring Himself out with comparative fulness in His communications to His friends, to an extent of which the ordinary Gospel records can give us no adequate idea. A large portion of the last Gospel is here occupied in the account of the conversation of one evening—an evening most important indeed, both on account of its nearness to the Passion and the sublimity of the mysteries on which its disclosures turned,—but still an evening very full of a succession of incidents, and when our Lord was forced, as we may say, by the circumstances of the time, to touch on a great many topics which He had no leisure to unfold in their fulness. He Himself tells the Apostles, towards the close of His discourse, that He had many things to speak of which they were not then able to receive. There must have been many such occasions in the course of His Ministry, especially during the latter months and weeks, when He withdrew, for fear of irritating His enemies, from many spheres of publicity, and into a sort of concealment, as was the case before the great miracle

on Lazarus. But He kept His Apostles with Him at such times, as we see by the history, and it seems strange that we should be content to take it for granted that on such subjects as that instanced, the subject of the Blessed Sacrament, His most loving and intimate friends should have asked Him no questions, and should have received no instructions from Him. We learn, among other things, from the discourse on which we shall soon have to dwell, that the Apostles were not afraid to put their difficulties before Him on such subjects. But when the actual moment came for the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, it is brought forward by Him in words which are so simple that they seem addressed to persons who were already familiar with the mystery, just as at a later time when the precept was given them about Baptism, the form is quite simply delivered, as if they had already received ample instruction concerning the nature and effect of that Blessed Sacrament. We must now pass on to the sayings and doings of this evening in the Cenacle.

We may begin the account we are to give of the doings of this last evening with the words of the Evangelist of love, who, as we have said, is to be our guide at this time. 'Before the festival-day of the Pasch, Jesus, knowing that His hour was come that He should pass out of the world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.' The words with which St. John begins his history have been already mentioned, as furnishing some clue as to the question which has lately been discussed as to the time at which this supper was celebrated. It is the more remarkable that St. John should insist on the day being 'before the festival-day,' while a different con-

clusion might have been drawn from the language of the other Evangelists, supposing it to be considered certain that the feast was celebrated, as far as the Paschal Supper was concerned, at the same time by our Lord and by the Jews. St. John's language seems a warning against the conclusion that so it was.

It should next be remarked that St. John seems to wish to remind us that the meaning of the word Pasch implies the passage from one place or person to another, and it was originally meant to commemorate the 'passing' of the destroying angel over the land of Egypt, in which he 'passed by' without hurting any one, the houses of the Israelites which had the blood of the lamb on their door-posts. It also commemorated the 'passage' of the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, and through the Red Sea, while the Egyptians who pursued them were drowned in the returning waters. Our Lord's passage was from this world unto the Father, into Whose hands He gave up His Soul on the Cross. But His was the blood sprinkled on the door-posts which alone can save any one from the avenging angel for sin, and it is through Him alone that any one can pass from the bondage of sin and of death into the liberty of the children of God. The return of this feast reminded Him, if we may so speak, of His approaching departure out of the world, to open the gates of Heaven to His redeemed. It reminded Him of the Sacrifice which He must offer of Himself on the Cross for the sins of men, without which no one of these could follow Him in His passage to the Father. It reminded Him also that the time during which He could show His love for those who were His own in the world, was now drawing very

speedily to its close, so that He could say to Himself what He said in another sense to Judas, 'What thou doest, do quickly.' And so it suggested to Him the actions which St. John is about to relate, actions of the highest charity and the deepest humility.

St. John uses these words, 'Jesus, knowing,' more than once in this short passage, and we find them also elsewhere in his Gospel. They seem to signify that the Evangelist enters into the Heart of his Blessed Lord, as it were, and points out that, though it was always impossible for our Lord not to know beforehand what He was about to do, or what were the circumstances which surrounded Him, yet still His Sacred Heart called up from time to time certain considerations concerning them, and made them the deliberate motives and grounds of what He was about to do, so that it might be said that He acted on them. For all was ordered in our Lord's Heart and in His conduct according to the most exquisite rules of perfection, the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and the knowledge of the will of His Father, giving a heavenly beauty and sublimity to all His actions and movements on which a heart like that of this blessed Evangelist delighted to dwell. The considerations which he here mentions, were before our Lord's Heart as He acted. The consideration that the time had now come for His passage to the Father out of the world was a reason in the first place why, having hitherto loved His own that were in the world, He should now love them unto the end, and in the second place, why He did all that He did in the way of love and humility in the time that remained before the actual passage to the Father, of which St. John is about to give us some account in the following chapters of his Gospel. He thus sums

up in a short sentence, suggested by the advent of the Pasch, the whole of what is contained in the passage to the Father out of the world, the whole of His humiliation in the Passion, and of the love He showed us thereby, the whole of the glory to His Father which that humiliation involved, and of the exaltation which He won thereby for Himself and for us. The passage was to be through the process of a most ignominious and painful death, in the course of which He was to cry out to His Father, 'Why hast Thou forsaken Me?' But all that it involved of shame and of pain, although in the Agony of the Garden He was to drink to the dregs the chalice of sorrow beforehand in His mind, is now covered up in the single word 'passage.' As if the Evangelist had been instructed to speak as tenderly and softly as possible of the effect of our sins on our Lord, and only to mention that the deliberate anticipation of it was to be to His Sacred Heart a reason for intensifying the love which He had hitherto shown, great as that love was, and was to prompt Him to a special act of thanksgiving and self-humiliation, as the most fitting introduction to so great a gratification of His love for His Father and for us, and so great an exaltation as that which was to follow to Himself.

St. John speaks, too, in the most general way of the love which our Lord now especially showed, as if He felt that He was speaking to persons who would understand Him. There are more ways than one in which His language about loving unto the end may be interpreted. For they may mean to the end of His life, to the utmost degree of love, or in a way to last on, for those He loved, after His visible presence was withdrawn from them, or so that notwithstand-

ing the poor return which had been made to Him for the love He had hitherto shown, He went on loving to the very end. For the passage out of this world to the Father, on which He was now to enter, was to be not only through the pains and shame of the Passion, but accompanied by perfidy and ingratitude and treason of the blackest kinds. St. John leaves us, as it were, to our own choice and our own thoughts concerning this excess of love, for, as has been said, he is about to begin his contribution to the history which had been told by others before him, and which he is to supplement, largely indeed, but so as to repeat almost in no case what has been said before him, being sure that the story was too dear to Christian hearts to have been forgotten.

It seems as if he meant to say, 'You know all the love which our Lord showed in various ways to His own who were in the world, up to the time of His passage to the Father. You know that He came into the world out of love and for love, that love was the great object for which He became Man, and His one great occupation throughout His Life up to the last. And you know further how at the time of which I am about to speak He increased and carried on His love to the very end, exhausting as it were, if that were possible, the love of His Heart for us, giving us all He could give, His very life and the last drop of His Blood. You know how He then contrived that His love should be present with us still, that His gifts did not cease when He passed to the Father, rather how, as it was said of Him at the beginning, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now." The love that He showed us at the last was not only the greatest gift of all, but the most permanent of all, and ever new, day after day, and

so it will remain even unto the end of the world. This you already know, and I am now to speak of it more particularly. For the great gifts by which Christian life is made the heavenly existence that it is, are the outcome and, as it were, the embodiment of the love with which His passage to the Father was adorned, the Church, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the Sacramental Presence of His Sacred Humanity in the Blessed Eucharist, and the Adorable Sacrifice. These embody the very utmost excesses of His love, they convey to us all the fruits of His Passion, and they are moreover lasting gifts even unto the end, for His promise is to hold good to the end of time, that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against His Church founded on the Rock.' The Christians for whom St. John wrote, lived in the daily enjoyment of these blessings and in the atmosphere of Heaven which they shed around. And so St. John alludes to them all in these few Divine words, for they all flow from and are summed up in his phrase of the love of our Lord 'unto the end.'

These words of St. John may be considered as a strain of grave and most sweet music, such as that which floats through the dome of St. Peter's at the Elevation of the Host in the solemn Mass of the Supreme Pontiff, lifting our hearts up to Heaven from which it seems to fall, and accompanied by no human voices, because what it expresses contains what no words can ever exhaust, nor the hymns of a thousand years adequately honour. 'Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.' It is something for human language to embrace what it cannot express, and through all eternity the praises of the angels and the saints will

not go beyond what is here folded up. But now St. John retires, for the next stage in the sacred history has been already told by other tongues. The next stage is the celebration of the last Pasch, and this we must endeavour to supply for ourselves. For though the three first Evangelists have left the fact on record, they have not been guided to describe the whole scene in its details. The eating of the Paschal Lamb is reckoned by some theologians as one of the so-called sacraments of the Old Testament. Not that it produced any spiritual effect by its own power, but that it was an occasion on which the devotion of those who fed upon it might be very strongly moved, and might win for them great helps from Heaven. If it was so to ordinary persons and on common occasions, it must surely have been so more than ever when our Lord partook of this feast with His beloved disciples, and when He did so with the express purpose of inaugurating the fulfilment of the figure and type which that sacrifice embodied in His own Person, making it almost the immediate introduction and preparation for the banquet He was to institute of His own precious Body and Blood, and then abolishing it for ever because its work in the Kingdom of God was at an end.

Our Lord was always most careful and devout, as we should say speaking of men, in the worship of His Father, and certainly His devotion would show itself most abundantly in a rite which commemorated such great mercies as those which the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb recalled. The well-known prescriptions with regard to this feast were sure to be observed by Him most punctually; the dress of the eaters which indicated the hurry in which the first feast was eaten, the care that not a bone of the lamb

should be broken, and that the whole should be consumed, the unleavened bread, the bitter herbs, and whatever had been added to the original institution in subsequent generations.³ Devout persons know how it is possible to give to the most ordinary action a symbolical and sacred meaning, and to feed their souls on the thoughts which such outward ceremonies suggest in connection with religion. Our Lord's ordinary actions were full of this kind of consecration, and much more would this have been the case when the action recalled an occasion in the history of the chosen people, so signal in itself and so pregnant with Divine meaning and spiritual interpretation.

St. Luke tells us that our Lord expressed His devotion on this occasion by speaking, as He so seldom did, of the feelings that were in His Heart at the time. 'And He said to them, With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you, before I suffer. For I say unto you that from this time I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. And having taken the chalice He gave thanks and said: Divide it among yourselves, for I say to you that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine till the Kingdom of God come.' We may consider these words as putting an end to, and taking honourable leave of the Old Law, in its figurative rite, which He was

³ The particular observance of the prescription of the Pasch being eaten by the partakers with staves in their hands and their loins girt, and the rest, is not mentioned in the descriptions which have been used below, of the celebration of the supper, which descriptions are derived from Jewish sources, but may be of late date. Possibly much of the primitive ritual was not kept up down to our Lord's time. But we may suppose that whatever He did was perfectly done, although He might not think it necessary to bring back what was obsolete. Thus our Lady's offering at the Purification was not the full offering that was in the first instance prescribed by the Law, but the custom of her time.

now performing for the last time. The words 'until the Kingdom of God come' need not be understood of any future eating or drinking. Our Lord's meaning seems to have been that He would not partake of the cup of wine, which, as we shall see, was passed round more than once in the course of the Paschal Supper, and which He would otherwise have shared with the rest as the Master of the feast. He would drink it no more till the time came for the fulfilment of the Paschal types, and He may refer on this occasion to the chalice of the Blessed Sacrament which He was about presently to institute. The similar words used by Him after the institution seem to have another and still deeper meaning.

It is reasonably supposed by some of the contemplatives, that our Lord would not let this sacred rite of the Old Law pass away without fully explaining it to the Apostles and any few disciples who may have been present with them, the significance of the ceremonies that were then observed, and in some measure of the whole ceremonial system, which was so soon to be superseded. The shadows were to be succeeded by the truth, the figures by the substance, but they had a beautiful office of their own, while they lasted, to those who could understand them, and they were all ordered by a special wisdom and providence of God which deserved commemoration and acknowledgment. Of the Apostles, some would understand more and others less, according to their spiritual advancement. Then our Lord, as it is thought, may have given praise and thanks to His Eternal Father, for the exaltation and glorification of His Holy Name, through the redemption and exaltation of the human race which was represented by these figures, and especially by the Paschal Lamb.

And to this thanksgiving and praise might be joined the renewal of His own offer of Himself to the fulfilment of what was thus represented by the figures of the Law, and a fervent prayer for the establishment in their place of the Christian system of sacraments, which was to take the place which had been in some respects filled by the rites which were now to pass away, and was to contain so far greater and more efficacious means of grace than those which were thus to be superseded. And in parting from this old system, our Lord would count over in thankful joy the whole multitude of souls that had been benefited by their means, and fed with grace by God on occasion of them, though not in the same way as through the sacraments of the Church. For all the great saints of the Mosaic dispensation had partaken in their time of these holy rites, and had shared in the privileges which they commemorated and recalled.

We see from the Psalms and the Prophets, as well as other parts of the Old Testament, how high and pure was the spiritual religion which was nurtured by that old system in the hearts of those who looked beyond the externals of those rites, and saw in them the truths which they foretold, and the graces which they promised to the simple and pure of heart, when they could only profit by them under great external difficulties, as we see in the history of Tobias and of Daniel, who poured forth his prayer three times a day with his window open toward Jerusalem, and who kept the time of the evening sacrifice when it was no longer offered in the Temple. A thousand such hidden saints of the Old Law would be present to our Lord's Heart this evening, united to the myriads of souls who were to profit by the Christian.

sacraments which were to derive their efficacy from the Sacrifice upon the Cross. There was no hurry or confusion about the thoughts and contemplations of the Sacred Heart, and the occasion of which we are speaking was the time in the course of His earthly sojourn at which it was fit that He should present to His Father the adoration, the thanksgiving, the supplication, intercession, and oblation of Himself, which the passing away of the old system and the introduction of the new system suggested. The system of the Mosaic and the Patriarchal Laws and their ordinances were imperfect indeed, when placed by the side of that more splendid system of grace that was to succeed it. But yet for many centuries they had been doing their work towards the sanctification of souls, and as a preparation for the knowledge of God through our Lord, which was the great gift of the mystery of the Incarnation. It was our Lord's part to fulfil the Law, and then to fold it up and take it out of the way, honourably and lovingly. This part He now performed in this solemn celebration of the Pasch for the last time.

These considerations may help us to understand the words of our Lord with regard to this occasion which are recorded by St. Luke, and which form the first of his few but precious additions to the short history of this last evening as he found it in the two first Evangelists, whose testimony is in truth identical, St. Mark having faithfully followed St. Matthew without difference or addition. It has already been said that they tell us extremely little concerning the sayings and doings of this time, as far as concerns the interior dealings of our Lord with the Apostles, although they are so unusually copious in the details of the Passion itself. As we

shall have to attempt in some small measure to speak of things which we assume to have taken place at this time, and which are not mentioned by the Evangelists, it is well to recall to our minds the reason for which we conceive this to be, not only lawful, but entirely in accordance with the spirit of a history of this kind. We all have heard of what is called by writers on the earliest ages of Christianity the *Disciplina Arcani*, the rule which is thought to have guided the first Christians to a very great silence indeed as to the more intimate mysteries of their faith and practice, and in which they conceived themselves to be acting on the precept laid down by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount, against giving that which is holy unto dogs, and casting pearls before swine.

The Gospels were written in and for the times when some rule of the kind was absolutely and imperatively necessary. Although they were entrusted to none but Christians, and by no means to all of them, they might easily fall into the hands of others outside, and be the occasion of calumnious charges, much misconception, and even possible profanations and blasphemies. There are traces of this great reserve with regard even to the Lord's Prayer, which is not given entire by any one but St. Matthew, who wrote for a community which, at the time of what may be called the publication of his Gospel, was already far in advance of others in point of time and had been trained by the Apostles themselves, and also tried in the fire of persecution. The silence about the sacramental system is remarkable in all. The form of Baptism is given nowhere but in the same Gospel of St. Matthew. No form of the other sacraments is given anywhere, except

that of the Holy Eucharist, and the form that has come down to us, from the tradition of the Church, is not exactly identical with any report in the New Testament. It seems possible that the words were purposely varied in different accounts.

We have habitually spoken of these and similar things in these volumes as if they were not the things on which it was the province of the Evangelists to instruct us. The first believers looked for instruction on these matters to the Church, which they had ever at hand as their guide, and which seems to have observed very strictly the law of which we speak. It seems most natural to attribute the silence of the Evangelists to their sense of the exclusive office of the ever-present Church in this particular, and unless some such explanation be given of that silence we may be misled, both as to the facts which are likely to have occurred at some period of our Lord's Life, and as to the amount of information concerning that which may be gathered from other sources. Especially also are we likely to have a false conception as to the meaning of the Evangelists in their omissions. We must remember that they did not, as it were, publish, as might now be done, a joint Gospel in four parts. Each Gospel was in the first instance a complete work, as it came from its author, and the whole Gospel was complete from the beginning in the mind of the Divine Author of Sacred Scripture. The readers of St. Mark required his Gospel for this among other reasons, that they had not at hand that of St. Matthew, which contained moreover many things which were suited to the Church for which they were written, not for others. The readers of St. Luke had not at hand the Gospels of St. Matthew

and St. Mark, which their own blessed Evangelist nevertheless respected, so to say, so as neither to repeat them or to contradict them, and the readers of St. John may be supposed to have known the previous Gospels, though not always to have had them familiar to their minds. But St. John must have had them before his mind, especially that of St. Luke, as he was clearly guided so as to make the two together, that of St. Luke and his own, supplement one the other in the most complete manner. In considering any part of the Sacred History such as that now before us it is very helpful to keep in mind the gradual growth of the whole in the hands of each successive writer. The growth from the short statements of St. Matthew and St. Mark to the full narrative of St. John is prodigious. But we observe in the earlier writers and to the later writers alike, the rule of reserve on the great subjects which we have mentioned.

In the words which St. Luke has here added to the earlier account our Lord tells the Apostles, that He has greatly desired to eat the Pasch with them before He suffered, because He is not to eat it again until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. Some writers who think that our Lord on this occasion anticipated the regular time for the celebration of the Pasch, have understood the words as directly confirming their theory, as if our Lord had thus given an explanation of the anticipation. His Passion began somewhat before the regular time for the celebration of the feast, and therefore, if He had not anticipated on this evening, He would never again have the opportunity of sharing with them His joy on that great occasion, and of imparting to them the instructions and enlightenment which they were then

to receive. It must be remembered that they had not, as His Apostles, had any other opportunity of celebrating this feast in His company. It cannot be doubted that it was a great privilege to celebrate with our Lord any of the great feasts, and that such a celebration must have been fraught with great benefit to their souls, simply because He could pour so much light into their hearts and minds by the explanations which He might give as to the spiritual meaning of the celebration, and the great works and designs of God of old which were then commemorated.

This would be the case, whether the Paschal Supper had been anticipated by our Lord or not. The benefit of instruction and enlightenment would be the same in either case. Our Lord's words may mean that, as the Apostles were to be the ministers of the New Covenant and its sacraments, which was to fulfil, take up, and inherit the place in the Kingdom of God which had formerly belonged to the Jewish feasts and rites, it was peculiarly fitting that, when our Lord fulfilled these last in order to take them away, He should do so with the Apostles in His company, that they might be the connecting links, as it were, between the new and the old dispensations, and receive from the Lawgiver of both the powers and the intelligence which the transfer conveyed from the one to the other. They were to be the priests of the New Testament, in which the Christian Sacrifice was to succeed the old rites, which were now fulfilled in our Lord's Person. The sacrifices and sacraments of the New Law were to succeed without break to those of the Old, as shadows which are filled up without change by the substances which they represented giving their life and body. This was to take

place in the sacrifice of the lamb, which was to be offered in the Temple at the same moment that the true Lamb of God was to take away the sins of the world on the Cross. The reason why the sacrifice of the Law lost its efficacy of every kind was, not that it was destroyed, but that it was fulfilled. It was as the Church sings,

In hac mensa novi Regis
Novum Pascha novæ legis
Phase vetus terminat.
Vetustatem novitas,
Umbra fugat veritas,
Noctem lux eliminat.

And as there was to be so close a connection between the old feast and the new, the banquet upon the typical sacrifice, and the banquet upon the true Sacrifice, there was every reason for our Lord's desire to celebrate the Old at the time that He instituted the New. The words before us may have this meaning, according to which He gives as the reason for His great longing for the time of this Pasch, that He will not again celebrate it until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. But the words are naturally enigmatical, like those of One Who is speaking of something which is more clearly before His own mind than before the minds of those to whom He speaks.

St. Luke adds that the same or like words were repeated concerning the cup—'And having taken the chalice, He gave thanks, and said, Take and divide it among you. For I say to you that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine till the Kingdom of God come'—words which were repeated afterwards, as it appears, for St. Matthew and St. Mark place them after the consecration of the chalice of the

Blessed Sacrament. On this point we shall have to speak more at length in the proper place. It is now only necessary to observe that the words have an appropriate meaning in both places, if we are to suppose that St. Luke, in this section of his account, intends us to think that he follows accurately the order of time, instead of to mention summarily what happened at this supper in a very summary way and consequently without regard to that order. For in this place our Lord might have desired, by refusing Himself to drink of the ordinary cup of the Paschal feast, to draw the minds of the Apostles to the greater Feast which He was preparing for them this very evening in the Holy Eucharist, which was indeed the fulfilment of the Paschal rite in the Kingdom of God, the new banquet which was to take the place of the old, and yet, as we must not forget, to be in its turn supplanted, because fulfilled, in the Eternal Banquet of the Beatific Vision, of which St. Thomas says:

Jesu Quem velatum nunc aspicio,
Ora, fiat istud quod tam sitio,
Ut te revelata cernens facie
Visu sim beatus Tuæ gloriæ.

It may be useful for us, before proceeding further, to give a short summary of the ritual of the Paschal feast, collected from various authorities. We must, however, premise that in the first place there is no absolute certainty either that all the rites mentioned would be observed by our Lord, or indeed that the rites in question, in which large additions seem to have been made by custom to the Mosaic prescriptions, were of any recognized and binding force. There were large spaces of time in the history of the nation when the observance of the feast had fallen

into desuetude. Of course it could not have been observed during the time of the Captivity, and at later periods when Jerusalem was for a time given over to pagan masters who forbade the worship of God altogether, as in the time of Antiochus. After the return from the Captivity, and again after the Asmonæan restoration, there was much strictness about the observance of the feasts, and probably in the time of our Lord some ritual was very exactly adhered to. But the great lapse of time must have introduced usages which perhaps He might not think it necessary to follow. And we are always somewhat uncertain as to the correctness of the accounts which have come down to us.

According to these accounts, the ceremonial was something of this kind. The company was collected on couches around the table—at least such seems to have become the custom in later days, for at the first Pasch the supper was eaten with shoes on their feet and staves in their hands, and with their loins girded as persons about to start immediately on a journey. In later times they seem to have reclined as at an ordinary supper. The actual repast began with a solemn act of thanksgiving, which was made by the head of the family, or the person who officiated as such, and after this all drank of a cup of wine. The next thing was for all to wash their hands, and this also was done with an act of thanksgiving. The viands which were to be consumed were then brought to the table—the bitter and other herbs, mentioned in Exodus,⁴ which commemorated the Egyptian bondage, the unleavened cakes, of which more presently, the thick broth ‘charoseth,’ made of dates and figs and other fruits, and of a clay

⁴ Exodus xii. 8.

or brick colour, to recall, it is said, the brickmaking of the Israelites in Egypt, the Paschal Lamb itself, and some other dishes which were also to form part of the supper, and, in the times when the Temple was standing, were often, it seems, parts of sacrifices which had been offered in the sanctuary as 'peace-offerings.' There were also, as has been said, some other herbs, such as are used in salads, besides the bitter herbs enjoined by the Law.

The actual meal began with the taking of some of the herbs by the officiator, as we may call him, who took a small quantity of these and dipped it in the broth 'charoseth,' after some words of thanksgiving to God. The rest of the party did the same. When children were present they were supposed to ask of the father or officiator why they did so many unusual things on this particular night, and then he explained briefly the mercies of God to the nation which were thus commemorated, the deliverance from bondage, and the rest. At this time the first part of the great Hallel was sung, that is Psalms cxii. and cxiii., which we know as the *Laudate pueri Dominum* and the *In exitu Israel*. It is clear that if these explanations of the reasons for the feast were continued to any length, and were followed by the chanting of the Psalms, this part of the supper may have been protracted. As yet nothing of the special viands of the Paschal feast had been consumed but the bitter herbs. There remained the unleavened bread and the lamb itself, and some accounts tell us that these were now brought on. It seems certain that there was here another passing round of wine, and another washing of the hands on the part of the father or officiator. The cups of wine drunk in the course of the whole supper seem to have been four.

There was a prayer of thanksgiving offered before the breaking of the unleavened bread, which was in two or three large cakes. One of the cakes was broken by the officiator, and the half of the broken one laid upon the unbroken. The broken half was not eaten then, but laid on the other, and kept to be consumed at the end of the whole supper. Lightfoot quotes some authorities who state that this reserved half was called an 'aphicomen,' and given to one of the company to keep, who covered it with his napkin. This seems to have been considered one of the most important parts of the ceremonial. The other portion of the broken cake was eaten by the officiator or father, after having been dipped in the broth already mentioned. He then took some of the other meats which had been offered with the lamb, and then some of the lamb itself. This was the substance of the feast. The father was to eat the last portion of the lamb himself. The supper ended by more wine, one of the two last cups being especially called the 'cup of blessing,' and the other the 'cup of the Hallel.' The last portion of the Hallel that was sung consisted of the four remaining Psalms from the hundred and fifteenth to the hundred and eighteenth, though some other Psalms seem to have been sometimes added.

We have here a somewhat long ceremonial, which would admit also of considerable expansion in point of time, according to the occasion and dispositions of those who were present at it. We have already remarked that the instructions or explanations given by the officiator might have been lengthened or shortened as circumstances required, and as the devotion of the company might suggest, and the same may be said with regard to the chanting of

the Hallel, which seems to be expressly mentioned by the two earlier Evangelists when they speak of the singing of the 'hymn.' It seems natural to suppose that our Lord would not omit anything that might tend to the reverent and thankful celebration of an anniversary of so much solemnity and importance, and so full of spiritual meaning and teaching, and this may be thought to have been the case more especially on the occasion of the fulfilment of the great ineffable mercies of God in the redemption of the world by the slaughter of the true Paschal Lamb, for the deliverance, not of one people from temporal bondage, but of the whole race of Adam from the slavery of sin and death. This is enough to make us feel sure that all the sacred rites would be performed by Him most punctually and exactly, as far as was consistent with His own gracious designs for the salvation of the world, and, that if it were necessary for those designs, in their perfection and beauty of significance, He would not have forbore even to exercise His supreme authority over His own institutions, so far as to anticipate, if so it was, the time of the celebration as it was commonly observed among the Jews.

As special mention is made by the Evangelists of the singing of the Hallel, it may be remarked that our Lord, Who was so fond of the Psalms, and Who has kept them in His Church as the great food and store of religious devotion, would naturally dwell with especial fondness on those passages in them in which the historical mercies of God to the nation are so dealt with as to suggest easily the more spiritual signification. Again, we cannot read over the Psalms of the Hallel without being struck by the many allusions which they contain to the Passion and its

circumstances, the humiliations as well as the sacrifice and triumph of our Lord—‘Who is as the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, and looketh down on the low things in heaven and on earth, raising the needy from the earth, and lifting up the poor out of the dunghill, that He may set Him with princes, with the princes of His people.’ And again, in the *In exitu Israel*,⁵ and in the next Psalm, *Dilexi*.⁶ ‘The sorrows of death have compassed me, and the perils of Hell have found me. I met with trouble and sorrow, and I called on the name of the Lord. . . . What shall I render unto the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me? I will take the chalice of salvation, and I will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord before all His people, precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.’ Almost the whole of the *Confitemini Domino*,⁷ has this character, and it contains the texts which our Lord had so lately quoted to His enemies, about the stone which the builders rejected becoming the head of the corner, and about binding the sacrifice to the horns of the altar. A meditation on the passages in the Psalms which were sung on this occasion would help us to understand many of the thoughts of the Sacred Heart during this evening in the Cenacle. We cannot suppose that anything that was said or done there in obedience to law and custom was done by our Lord and His Apostles in any perfunctory way, and without the deepest devotion of heart.

It is not easy to refrain from asking ourselves the natural question which rises to the mind, as to the amount of connection that may have existed between the ancient ritual of which we have been speaking,

⁵ Psalm cxiii.

⁶ Psalm cxiv.

⁷ Psalm cxv.

and the new rites which must be supposed to have been introduced by our Lord at the same time for His Church, in a greater or less degree, such as that of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament and of other great mysteries which may be classed with it. It is quite clear that the Evangelists have been guided to be so reticent on these points as to leave us very much to conjecture how far the celebration of the Paschal Supper was kept by our Lord entirely distinct from the celebration of any new sacramental rites, or how far the latter may have been interwoven with, and made in some sort and to some extent to spring and grow out of the former. For it is clear that St. Matthew, who is followed so closely as to this by St. Mark, tells us in the briefest possible words that the Paschal Supper—if so it was—was celebrated and then succeeded by the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, and that the additions that are made by St. Luke and St. John to the history leave out the details of the celebration of the Paschal Supper together, except as to one or two points in which they may seem to allude to them. In fact the whole history is remarkably silent as to any such connection or interweaving of the two as to which we are inquiring. It is not wonderful that St. Matthew should be content with the bare statement of the facts, still less that St. Mark, writing for the Roman Church, should follow him, nor is the silence of the two later Evangelists less easy to account for.

The points at which the veil seems to be partially lifted are few indeed. St. Luke's few words about the desire of our Lord for the celebration of the Paschal feast with His disciples, have already been mentioned. In the verses which immediately follow

he seems clearly to be speaking of the cup of wine which formed a part of the beginning of the Paschal celebration. It may be possible to conjecture that there is an allusion to the unleavened cake which was broken, laid aside, and kept for the last, when we are told so distinctly that the bread used by our Lord for the consecration of the Blessed Sacrament was taken by Him 'while they were eating.' For as St. Luke and St. Paul expressly say, the chalice was taken by Him for the consecration of the Precious Blood 'after supper,' or 'at the end of supper,' and this has created a difficulty among the Christian commentators, who are loth to think that a considerable interval ensued between the consecration of the two Sacred Species. It may be the case, that the cake or loaf was 'taken' in the midst of the supper, but put aside, according to the custom, to be kept to the end, and eaten last, and that it is in this way that the Evangelists would have us understand the facts, St. Luke and St. Paul adding the words 'after supper,' as to the chalice, in order to guide us to the full truth. Again, although on account of the brevity of their history, we cannot argue that the Hallel was sung only just before the departure from the Cenacle, St. Matthew and St. Mark seem to place it there. These are about the only points as to which the Evangelists may seem to gain any illustration for their history from an examination of the ceremonial of the Paschal Supper.

The additions that are made to the story of the evening by St. Luke and St. John are of immeasurable importance to the Christian reader, but they are hardly of importance as to this particular matter. They are, moreover, very different in character, and they seem to avoid the very allusion to, and illus-

tration of, the connection between the old rite and the new, of which we are in search. St. Luke seems to limit himself to the addition of a few sayings and incidents which had not been related by his predecessors, and in giving them he seems to neglect what may be supposed to have been the order of time, probably because they were in reality not connected in that order among themselves, but each with some other sayings and doings of which he makes no mention, because others had already mentioned them. Their value as contributions to the history has little to do with their place in point of time.

On the other hand, the additions made by St. John seem to flow on consecutively, only that we have here and there to supplement them largely, because he leaves unsaid what had been already told, however great may be its importance, trusting to that very greatness for its presence in the minds of the faithful for whom he was writing. Thus we shall have to throw the additions of St. Luke to some extent together, without attempting to fix for certain their precise place in the story of the evening, while those of St. John seem to hang together by a natural cohesion, the only question being at what point of his narrative we are to insert what he does not mention, but had most certainly prominently before his mind from the beginning, that is in the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, the central point of all that our Lord said and did on this most memorable evening.

CHAPTER IV.

The Washing of the Feet.

St. John xiii. 2—20; *Story of the Gospels*, § 151.

THE considerations which are found in the last chapter will explain to the reader the method according to which we propose to proceed, in this and some following chapters. It is quite possible that some of the incidents of this evening—especially that of the washing of the feet of His Apostles by our Lord, of which we are now to speak—may have occurred while the Paschal Supper was going on. We have been obliged to deal with that supper separately, and without stopping to discuss at what particular point therein this most significant ceremony may have actually taken place. It will be found that other sayings and doings of our Lord are treated in the same way. We consider that we have the authority of the sacred historians themselves, not indeed for every particular of the arrangement which we shall follow, but for the principle itself of arranging them thus, without any attempt to select, except in one or two most important cases, the particular point at which certain sayings and answers of our Lord were uttered. And we proceed at once, without further delay, to that which it was one of the most important parts of the commission of St. John, writing late in the period of the Apostolic age, to put on record for the benefit of the Church in all time.

We have already partly commented on the introductory words with which St. John prefaces this part of his work, on which we are now engaged, and the remainder now comes before us: 'Before the feast-day of the Pasch, Jesus knowing that His hour was come, that He should pass out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end.' Something has already been said in explanation of these words, but a pause was made in order that some remarks might follow in general on the feast itself. After having alluded, as we suppose, to the great act of love by which He gave Himself in the Blessed Sacrament, in the words, 'Having loved His own who were in this world, He loved them unto the end,' St. John goes on to speak of a circumstance of this Thursday evening which had been reserved for him to reveal to the Church, although St. Matthew must have known it as well as himself by personal knowledge. St. Mark must have heard of it from St. Peter, and St. Luke from others of the Apostles as well as St. Peter, who appears to have been one of those from whom he derived his information. For the Holy Ghost, the Divine Author of Holy Writ, chose that St. John should be, in the sense which we have explained, the historian of the Passion. The circumstance of which we now speak is the washing of the feet of the Apostles, the actual place of which is not precisely fixed even by St. John. It was intended, in the sense which will be explained, as an introduction to the great manifestations of love which were then immediately to follow.

'And when supper was made'¹—words which are a literal translation from the Latin version, and

¹ *δείπνου γενομένου*. The Vulgate has *facta cæna*.

which signify, according to the original, that supper had been made ready and was now begun—‘the devil having put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him,’ Jesus ‘knowing that the Father had given Him all things into His hands, and that He came from God and was going to God, He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments, and having taken a towel, girded Himself. After that He putteth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.’ The meaning of the words ‘supper was made’ is ambiguous in the Latin, and in that version might be taken to mean that the Lavanda took place after supper, instead of soon after its beginning.² When our Lord saw all things ready, and the feast on the Paschal Lamb begun, He took the occasion to perform this great act of humility and of charity of which we are to speak. St. John also mentions that Satan had now put it into the heart of Judas to betray Him. He seems to mention this as having some connection, in our Lord’s mind, with what He was about to do. The purpose of betraying our Lord had, as we know, been already formed by Judas, who had before this gone to the Chief Priests and made his compact with them. But he had not known until this evening where our Lord was to keep the solemnity, and this knowledge was perhaps necessary to enable him to inform the Chief Priests where our Lord would be to be found that night. In this way the final plans of Judas may not have

² In the accounts which have come down to us of the Paschal Supper as celebrated by the Jews, there is mention of the frequent washing of the hands on the part of those who partook of the viands. Perhaps our Lord substituted the Lavanda for one of these washings.

been matured till the last, and therefore it could not have been absolutely settled that the betrayal should take place at once.

St. John may have mentioned this circumstance rather with reference to our Lord's own thoughts and affections at the time. The betrayal of Judas, which was now a settled plan, was the deepest stab His Heart had received, and the greatest act of ingratitude, as well as of perfidy, that could be committed. St. John seems to bid us note that, instead of provoking our Lord to some strong act of vindictive anger—by which He might with perfect ease have defeated all the plans of Judas and His enemies, as He had hitherto baffled them—the design of the traitor only led Him to fresh and most marvellous devices of the sublimest love and charity, at the same time that He set the fact before His mind as a motive for accomplishing these at once, His time being shortened, as it were, by the imminent consummation of the treachery of Judas. He was also, by what He was about immediately to do, to make one more loving appeal to that seared and dead heart of His Apostle, which had already resisted so many efforts of His love, and which still remained free to use the liberty with which it was endowed, and by the help of grace, to repent even then. For it cannot be without some reason that the Evangelist seems to mark the connection between the design of Judas and this action of our Lord. The treachery of Judas may be considered as having drawn from our Lord the action of the Lavanda, as a fresh attempt to touch the false disciple's heart, and also, as He could foresee the failure of the attempt, as giving to Himself the opportunity for which He wished of speaking about the treachery itself, and so pre-

paring for the dismissal of the traitor, apparently, in peace.

The action of which we are to speak has a two-fold character—that of self-humiliation, and that of purification. The self-humiliation was connected with the motives of which St. John goes on to speak, the purification with the symbolical purport of the act itself, at whatever time it was to be done. For it represented in an almost sacramental manner the cleansing of the souls of those who were to partake of the Banquet which was to be presently instituted. This character of the rite is mentioned soon afterwards by our Lord when He speaks of those that are cleansed needing only to wash their feet, and the rest. To any of the Apostles the sight of our Lord at his feet, with water to wash them, would suggest in the first instance the immense humiliation of the Son of God, and in the second place the cleansing power which He could exercise. In this sense the act was a tender invitation to Judas to enter into himself by contrition, and allow our Lord, now at the eleventh hour, to cleanse him from his guilt. And surely never could such an appeal have been made in a more tender manner. These may be some of the reasons for the mention of the state of the heart of Judas at this time.

St. John then gives us the considerations which were placed before the Sacred Heart at this time, and on which he seems to intend us to learn that our Blessed Redeemer acted. They are three. First, ‘Knowing that the Father hath given Him all things into His hands.’ Again, ‘and that He came from God,’ and again, ‘and goeth to God, He riseth from supper,’ and the rest. The meaning of the expression, ‘Jesus knowing,’ has been explained above.

The knowledge of the truths which are spoken of in the words which follow, could not be new to our Lord, for His Sacred Humanity knew from the very beginning of Its existence all that could be known, and, indeed, the first act of the Sacred Heart when It began to beat was an act of loving gratitude and self-oblation to the Eternal Father, based upon this knowledge. But His mind now turned deliberately to choose these considerations as motives for His actions, of which we are to hear. The considerations were, in the first place, that the Father had given all things into His hands. That is, He had received in His Human Nature from the Father, to Whom the Divine work of Providence and the government of all things is attributed, the full commission to accomplish the work of redemption in all its particulars, and also the full power for everything that was required or convenient for the accomplishment of that work. It was an immense boon to have to carry out this, God's greatest work. It gave God immense glory, it enabled, so to say, the Sacred Human Nature of our Lord to show His love and gratitude adequately, and make a fitting return for the immense gift of the Personal Union with the Divine Nature which It had received. This seems to be the sense of these first words, that the Father had put all things into His hands.

St. John adds, 'And that He came from God, and goeth to God.' These two statements may be considered separately or conjointly. They refer, it seems, to our Lord's Mission, the mission of a Divine Person, Who has received the whole Divine Nature from the Father, to the special work of the Incarnation and the redemption of the world by the Passion, now about to take place, which was to

issue in His return to God, having accomplished the great work which He had to do. His love for His Father was to be shown in this work. It was to be the expression and manifestation of His love, an expression and a manifestation worthy of that love, and therefore it was to issue in the greatest, most marvellous, and most enduring boons that could possibly be given to mankind, for whose sake He was sent. With these considerations before His Heart—overwhelming and swallowing up all thoughts of the unworthiness of men, in themselves, or their ingratitude to Him, or the slowness with which they might cooperate with His mercy, or the repugnance with which the Human Nature might shrink back from the Passion, in which He was to place Himself before His Father with all the guilt of our sins upon Him, and to endure His wrath and vengeance as vented in the most bitter sufferings—our Blessed Lord is said by St. John to have set Himself to the work before Him at that time. So that His love for His Father was the motive before Him in all that He was now to do,—a motive which no difficulty could shake, no sense that the task was hard, no feeling that those for whom He was to suffer were ungrateful, and would make little return for His sacrifice.

The truths which are expressed in these words are continually coming to the surface in what follows, and are frequently touched on by our Lord in the long discourse which St. John is presently to set before us. They are meant, perhaps, here to prepare us for very great things indeed in the actions and gifts to us of our Lord in the course of this evening, to lift our hearts up to the sublimest mysteries and the most marvellous revelations of love, that we may in some sort enter into the heavenly train of thoughts

and affections which must have formed the atmosphere in which the Sacred Heart lived at this time. Difficult indeed St. John must have found it to transport the faithful of his own later years, when this Gospel was written, or of any other period in the Church, into the atmosphere to which these words of his belong, which was all around him and the faithful and loving Apostles, with all their weakness and dulness, who were gathered around our Lord at this supper. The great acts which belong to this evening are summed up, as we are told by Toletus, under three heads. First is the great example of the Lavanda, with all its immense humiliations and charities. We shall have to see how much more than the example of humility is contained in this great action, when considered in its relation to the Eucharistic Banquet (to which it was an introduction), and to the doctrine concerning the cleansing of the soul in the same way as the feet of those who were generally not otherwise in need of cleansing, which our Lord connects with it in His words to St. Peter, and the manner in which that lesson is habitually applied by Christians in their daily life.

Next there is the boon of boons, in which our Lord's love shows itself out to the utmost, emptying itself, in St. Paul's language—the gift of the Blessed Sacrament and Sacrifice of the Altar. And last, there is the great instruction which is contained in the last loving discourse which is here recorded by St. John, partly, as we may judge from the subject-matter, before the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, and partly after that institution. Here, too, there is the same observation to be made, that the magnitude of the Divine gifts spoken of extends itself far beyond what is actually mentioned or even alluded to by

St. John. The gift of the Blessed Sacrament supposes the Sacrifice of the Cross, which had not yet been accomplished, besides the institution of the Christian priesthood, and the continuation of that priesthood even to the end of the world, as well as probably many other wonderful gifts and institutions depending on that. The third gift mentioned, that of the great instruction given by our Lord, contains in itself treasures of doctrine which He Himself only touched upon, most summarily, in what He said to the Apostles that evening. For it was left for the Holy Ghost afterwards to complete and impress on their hearts more fully the blessed truths which were then brought to light, 'taking,' as our Lord said, of what was His, and imparting it to them, and this wonderful guidance 'into all truth,' as He said also, is ever continued in the Church until the end of time. Of these three things, this Evangelist gives us some account of the first and the third, the second had been summarily mentioned, but no more, by the other Evangelists before him.

The words before us, then, may be considered as furnishing the revelation which the Evangelist was allowed to make of the thoughts and affections of the Sacred Heart at this time. All was in order and perfect harmony in that Sacred Heart, and St. John seems to be commissioned to tell us that the actions and gifts of this evening proceeded from these considerations which he mentions, rather than from any others, and that we are to attend to the connection between the one and the other. Moreover, we cannot be wrong in thinking that St. John means to say that those sayings and doings of our Lord at this time, which are not mentioned by him because they had been mentioned by the Evangelists

who wrote before him, were founded on these considerations, as well as those which it is his part to set before us. These words of his are therefore the legitimate account of the springs of our Lord's thoughts, as far as they are revealed to us, of all that flowed from His Sacred Heart in word or deed during this memorable night, of the Prayer to the Father, for instance, as well as of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. Although the words may seem to relate more particularly, in his narrative, to the washing of the feet, we should lose something of the truth if we limited their application to that action. Again, as it is natural to suppose that there may have been a great number of things said and done by our Lord at this time, we may be sure that this verse of St. John is meant to have its application to all of them, and not merely to the comparatively slender range of our knowledge concerning them. Our Lord set before His Sacred Heart the truth that He had all things given into His hands by the Father, and that He came forth from God, and was about to return to God, and these truths were present to His mind in everything that He did and said, whether recorded, or not.

We shall find these three things, which are mentioned as being put by our Lord before His mind, in the manner which has been explained, at the beginning of the acts and sayings of this evening, meeting us again at the end of the same evening, in the great prayer which our Lord made to His Father for the Church, with which St. John closes his account of the doings in the Cenacle. Our Lord says to His Father in that prayer, 'As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him.'

This is the first thing here mentioned, 'Jesus knowing that the Father hath given Him all things unto His hands.' Then, again, our Lord says, 'Now they have known that all things which Thou hast given Me are from Thee . . . and they have received (My words) and have known in very deed that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. . . . And now I am not in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to Thee.' Here are the two other considerations mentioned in the passage before us by St. John, 'That He came from God and goeth to God.' If we keep these words of the Evangelist in mind, we shall find them help us in understanding the narrative as it proceeds.

The considerations just before mentioned by St. John, where he seems to speak of the gift of the Blessed Sacrament, 'That our Lord knowing that His hour was come that He should go out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end,' may be understood as telling us that the time for giving that great gift, the extreme outpouring of His love to us, had not come before, but that it came fitly and beautifully at the end of His course on earth. This is what St. Thomas tells us in his hymn—

Verbum supernum prodiens,
Nec Patris linquens dexteram,
Ad opus suum exiens,
Venit ad vitæ vesperam.
Ad mortem a discipulo
Suis tradendus æmulis,
Prius in vitæ ferculo
Se tradidit discipulis.

In the same way, we may find these considerations to have been the foundations of our Lord's thought-

ful care for us, and the motives of His choices for our benefit, providing for all our wants in the new state in which He was to leave the Church, without His visible presence, making them just what they are, because He so saw them to be what was tenderest and most perfect for the end and the time which He had before Him.

Having then, as it seems, given the key-note to the whole history of our Lord's sayings and doings during this evening, St. John proceeds at once to the first act which he records after the supper had been begun. 'When supper was made, the devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him, knowing that the Father hath given all things into His hands, and that He came from God and goeth to God, He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments, and having taken a towel, girded Himself. After that, He putteth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.' As has been said, the action here related has a two-fold character, because it was intended as an unspoken parable, an action like that of the cursing the fig-tree, or the setting a child in the midst of the disciples, and its signification in this sense is something different from its signification simply as an action. We may leave aside the first-mentioned signification for the present, and consider simply as it is in itself, that is, an action of great self-humiliation. It was an action that was generally performed by a servant for guests, when they entered a house, as we learn from our Lord's words to the Pharisee who entertained Him, and from the instance of the blessed Magdalene when she abased herself so low in public

as to wash our Lord's feet with her tears and anoint them with her ointment.³

In this sense St. John seems to mean that our Lord considered the fact, that the time had now come for His betrayal, the truth,—that He had been given all things into His hand by the Father, that He had come forth from the Father into the world, and now was again to return to the Father, to receive from Him the eternal Kingdom which He had won for Himself and for us—as something which called upon Him for some great act of utter humiliation before God and man, in order that the actual work before Him, of the redemption of the world by His Passion, might be inaugurated and, as it were, solemnly consecrated by such an act of humiliation. Thus, in the same way, when He was about to begin the work of His Public Ministry, He chose to do this by the great public humiliation of His Baptism by St. John, which was a profession of actual sin. And again, later on, in Galilee, before He took upon Himself the public Preaching through that country, He courted, as we may surely say, the great public humiliation of the rejection of His claims by His own countrymen, who even attempted to put Him to death by throwing Him down the precipice.

Now He was about to enter on His Passion, and, still more immediately, to institute a large number of sacraments, and the like, which were to abide in His Church, to give a new Law, found a new Priesthood and a new Sacrifice. This was therefore a fitting time for a very great act of self-humiliation. The Saints have constantly acted in imitation of their Blessed Master, when they have had to begin any great work or assume any exalted office, which

³ St. Luke vii. 37.

in the eyes of the world might seem to suggest some display of pomp and dignity, but which they have been guided by a holy instinct to begin with a great humiliation. Our Lord was indeed ever on the watch to set them an example of humility, and at this time especially He had an additional reason, because He was about to raise them to the dignity, in some respects, higher than that of the Angels, of being the ministers of His sacraments and the priests of the Adorable Sacrifice. He speaks of this example in the first words which He addressed to them after the Lavanda was finished, on which we shall presently have to comment. But the incident of St. Peter's objection to what our Lord proposed to do is first to be explained.

'He cometh therefore to Simon Peter.' There is a difference here among Christian expositors. Some of them think that the text seems to imply that St. Peter was the first in order to whom our Lord came. Their reason is that he was really the first in dignity, and our Lord was likely to follow that order on an occasion like this. Again, it is said that the story implies that St. Peter was the first, because, if any one else had been approached by our Lord for the same purpose, that other, unless, perhaps, it had been Judas, would have objected and resisted in the same way and from the same motives as St. Peter. Others, however, think that the narrative implies that our Lord came to St. Peter in due course, taking the Apostles as they lay or sat at table, and that either no one before him had been bold enough to remonstrate, or that St. Peter made his objection without regarding their example. In truth, the Sacred Text does not tell us anything certainly as to the matter, but we are hardly justi-

fied in imputing to St. Peter's resistance a meaning which implies any reflection upon the other Apostles, or a preference of himself invidious to them. There seems therefore good reason for the conjecture that St. Peter was so placed that the washing would naturally begin with him. He may have kept silence till what our Lord was about to do could no longer be doubted.

'He cometh therefore to Simon Peter,' and the words of the original do not seem to require that the washing had begun before He came to him. 'And Peter said to Him, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?' The words signify that he felt himself unworthy, and that he could not make up his mind to allow so great a condescension on the part of our Lord, though he was restrained by his reverence for Him from open refusal. 'Jesus answered and said to him, What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shall know hereafter.' Both the occasion and the words of our Lord are almost exactly parallel to what we read in the account of our Lord's coming to St. John Baptist at the beginning of His Ministry. Then St. John had said, 'I have need to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to me? And Jesus answering said to him, Suffer it now, for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice. Then he suffered Him.'⁴ In the present case, the first question of St. Peter answers to the words of St. John Baptist. The answer of our Lord to St. Peter is somewhat similar to His answer to St. John, on account of the parabolic meaning of the action on which He was engaged. It therefore was an occasion on which the Apostle might trust that His Master had a good reason for what He did, though it was not

⁴ St. Matt. iii. 14, 15.

disclosed. He tells St. Peter, in effect, that there is a mystery about this washing of the feet of the disciples, which he will come to know by-and-bye. For it had reference, as we learn from His further words to the Apostle, to the cleansing from daily offences, the dust that gathers upon the souls, even of the servants of God, which is necessary to be continually removed, in order to make them as fit as possible for the reception of the grace of the sacraments, especially of the Blessed Eucharist. This doctrine was to be taught to the Apostles, either later on this same evening, or after the Resurrection, whenever the whole system of the sacraments, the priesthood, and the Adorable Sacrifice was more fully explained by our Lord.

St. Peter failed at the time to discern the full significance of our Lord's words, which in truth corresponded to the words about the 'fulfilment of all justice,' which had been used by Him to St. John. Both of these great Saints knew Who our Lord was, and his own great inferiority, and his unworthiness either to baptize or to have his feet washed by Him Who alone could give any cleansing efficacy to the baptism of penance, or to any other holy rite. It was most true, as St. John said, that he had need to be baptized by our Lord. But when he had uttered his words of loving and reverent remonstrance, he was obedient at once, both because he recognized in our Lord his own Sovereign Master, and because he may have discerned the truth hidden under the answers which he received, that through our Lord's humiliation in receiving his baptism, the Christian Sacrament of Regeneration was to be instituted in all its wonderful and manifold efficacy. St. Peter might have come to see, in like manner,

that there was some mysterious purpose in what our Lord was doing, a purpose full of treasures of grace to the Church. But this he did not see at the moment.

St. Peter was thinking only of the material action of the washing of the feet as an act of great humiliation on the part of his Lord, and his impetuous nature led him to a display of mistaken love, instead of humble submission to our Lord. 'Peter said to Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash Thee not, thou shalt have no part with Me. Simon Peter saith to Him, Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is clean needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly, and you are clean, but not all. For He knew who he was, that would betray Him, therefore He said, You are not all clean.' St. John had probably a more perfect intelligence of the purpose of our Lord in coming to his Baptism than St. Peter had of the deep meaning of our Lord's action now. Yet in itself the humiliation of our Lord at His Baptism was greater than that which He took on Himself on this occasion, and the answer of our Lord ought to have been quite enough to secure the obedience of His Apostle. However, his character showed itself in his refusal, as it came out before, when he endeavoured out of love to divert our Lord from His purpose as to the Passion, and brought on himself the severe rebuke, 'Get thee behind Me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things which are of God, but the things of men.'

Our Lord's answer was a gentle loving rebuke, frightening St. Peter with a threat that, if he did not submit he could have no part with Him, the

greatest punishment for so loving a soul, and involving the greatest spiritual loss as well as banishment from his Master. 'If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with Me.' It is clear that these words cannot apply to the external action which our Lord was then about to perform, except so far as the obedience of the Apostle required him to submit to this, or to whatever else our Lord might enjoin. But He does not say, 'If thou dost not obey Me,' but 'If I wash thee not,' and we are therefore led to believe that the washing was declared by our Lord to be necessary to St. Peter if he was to have any part with our Lord. The words are strictly true in the sense in which this washing is understood spiritually, for unless our Lord wash our souls by the grace purchased by His Blood, no one can have any part with Him. But there seems also to be a distinct reference to the sacred rite which was so soon to follow, and the meaning appears to be that the cleansing of the soul from even lesser stains was necessary in order to the perfect reception of the Blessed Sacrament which our Lord was about to institute. This sense is signified by the words which our Lord added about the cleansing.

St. Peter, passing from one extreme to another, as it appears, as soon as our Lord had spoken the words about the necessity of the cleansing, cried out, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head,' as if he could never have too much of this loving cleansing by our Lord. And our Lord answered him, 'He that is washed, needest not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly.' That is, persons in whom the state of grace is habitual and who have no grievous sin which separates them from God, have only need to cleanse their souls from the

lesser stains which they contract in their daily walk through life, as a person who habitually keeps his whole body clean by continual washing or bathing, has need day after day to wash his feet, which contract every day some small ordinary dust or dirt, such as is inevitably collected in the streets and roads along which they pass. When this daily accruing defilement is washed away, they remain altogether clean without more. This is the practical lesson which is acted upon day after day by thousands in the Church, who cleanse their souls by self-examination and contrition before they receive any sacrament, enter into converse with God in prayer, or perform any important spiritual exercise whatever. This lesson is inculcated in the Holy Mass, which begins by the *Confiteor*, in which the priest, after recalling mentally his daily sins, implores the prayers of our Lady, the Saints, and then of the people, who in their turn repeat it to him. The same lesson is taught by the repetition of the *Confiteor* at Prime and Compline, and, indeed, in numberless habitual practices throughout the day. And it has always been thought in the Church that this was the practical lesson which our Lord intended us to gather from this symbolical action of His, and this meaning of His action is independent of its other and primary signification as a great exercise and example of humility.

Some commentators on the scene blame St. Peter for a certain obstinacy and self-reliance in the opposition. It can hardly be said that the opposition which he made was unnatural, as it showed humility and devotion to our Blessed Lord, and thus far it may be considered as resembling what he had said to our Lord after the miraculous fishing, 'Depart

from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' There is not any severity in the reproof administered by our Lord, which amounted to a gentle assurance that some great benefit was involved in his submitting to the act which seemed to place our Lord below His servants, and in a menial condition. At the most there was some want of self-control, some absence of perfect submission and reverence, some self-will and pertinacity, even if there was not also some singularity and separation of himself from others.

The last words of our Lord which are here mentioned by St. John, 'Ye are clean, but not all,' are followed by a comment of the Evangelist, stating that 'He knew who he was that would betray Him, therefore, He said, You are not all clean.' It was then, a point of importance, in the mind of the Apostle, that our Lord took care to show that His betrayer was known to Him beforehand.

Several things are here suggested to us. First, that St. John here repeats the fact that our Lord was aware of what was to be, which fact, as regards the state of mind of Judas, St. John had mentioned in the introductory sentence, in which he seems to collect the particular things which our Lord, Who was ignorant of nothing, set before His own mind when He began the action of the Lavanda, as being, in a certain sense, motives to Him for that action. It is one of several items of knowledge which are so mentioned. For the purpose of betrayal, of which St. John says that Satan had at that time put it into the heart of Judas, was a reason for the action of the Lavanda, inasmuch as it gave our Lord an opportunity of humbling Himself most lovingly and tenderly to the erring friend whom He still sought to reclaim, of making a last appeal to his affection and

loyalty, and also of offering him the grace of repentance, which would have led to his pardon. For the action of the Lavanda was at all events one that might well have aroused loving and contrite thoughts in the heart of Judas, and this must have led to a large effusion of grace which would have issued in his complete conversion. It may also have been fixed by our Lord at this particular point in the events of this evening, for the reason that it led on naturally to His speaking of the traitor, though without disclosing his name, in order that, should the appeal to the love which might still linger in the heart of Judas fail to convert him, he might the more easily be driven to depart as of his own accord and without exciting any suspicion in the minds of his brethren.

In the words on which we are now commenting, it appears that our Lord distinguishes between two degrees of cleanness of body, which may have their corresponding verification in the state of the soul of which He spoke. Those that are generally in the state of grace and union with our Lord are clean, and yet they need at particular times and on particular occasions the further purification such as is represented by the cleansing of the feet from daily stains on the part of those who are clean in other respects. But those who are not in the state of grace, but are separated from God by grievous and habitual sin, need the restoration of the state of grace, and not only the purification from lighter and occasional defects, errors, forgetfulnesses and half involuntary mistakes and shortcomings in God's service. Our Lord makes clearly a distinction of this kind when He says that the Apostles were clean, but not all, and St. John gives

this as a sign that He knew who it was that should betray Him. Judas therefore needed a more perfect and total washing than could be given him by the cancelling of lighter faults and negligences. We seem here to have the distinction clearly made by our Lord Himself between the faults which are not inconsistent with the state of grace and those which are inconsistent with the same state, and He connects the difference with this rite of the washing of the feet, which symbolizes the purification of the soul from slighter faults through His Precious Blood. Those who are clean may still need and profit by a further purification, which answers to the washing of the feet. But He does not say that those who are altogether unclean can obtain freedom from stains without a more powerful purification than that which is signified here. The obscurity which hangs over the language is just that which might be expected when our Lord was speaking figuratively and acting parabolically, and before He had instituted or conferred the special powers contained in the Sacrament of Penance.

Again, it must be noticed that this is the first word of our Lord in the course of this evening, in which He alludes to the presence of the traitor among the rest. And it appears that from this time, and after the washing of the feet had been accomplished, it became a prominent thought in the mind of our Lord that Judas was to be dismissed from that holy company. This appeal, which, as has been said, was now made by our Lord to him, kneeling at his feet and washing them, was a fresh effort made in word and deed to bring about his conversion. And we cannot wonder that after he had steeled his heart against our Lord now, it was time for him to go.

Who can tell how powerfully the appeal had struck on the heart of Judas? And now that it had been repelled, how hard and dark it must have left him! The greater the graces that are offered to us, and the greater the tenderness and urgency with which they are offered, the more incapable do they leave the soul, when it has decidedly turned away from them, of yielding to fresh solicitations of that love which has been rejected. It was probably in mercy and charity that our Lord now determined to send Judas away. He was to go for many reasons. One of them was that our Lord must have seen that in the state to which he had brought himself, his presence during the great mysteries which were to follow would only involve great profanation on his part, and greater ruin to his soul and greater offence to God. Thus we find, as it seems, that our Lord begins now to prepare the way for the final dismissal of Judas, doing it, however, with the greatest possible gentleness to him, the greatest possible consideration for his character, and very great care that it should be done so that no one should suspect why it was that he was sent away.

Then, after He had washed their feet and taken His garments, being set down again, He said to them, 'Know you what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also. Amen, amen, I say to you, the servant is not greater than his lord, neither is the Apostle greater than He that sent him. If you know these things, you shall

be blessed if you do them. I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen. But that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with Me, shall lift up his heel against Me. At present I tell you, before it come to pass, that when it shall come to pass, you may believe that I am He. Amen, amen, I say to you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me.'

It was quite in our Blessed Lord's loving and gracious manner that He should not wait to be asked the meaning of what He had done, but should speak of it first Himself. Perhaps what had passed had left a deep and solemn impression upon the Apostles, on account of the gravity and tenderness with which He performed the action of the washing, and because the words which He had added, that they were clean but not all, conveyed the first intimation which He had given that night about the coming betrayal. Some time before, in Galilee, after the discourse on the Blessed Sacrament in the synagogue at Capharnaum, He had uttered the awful words that He had chosen them twelve, and that one of them was a devil. But we are not told that on the rather frequent occasions since that time on which He had forewarned them about the Passion, He had said anything about the traitor, except as far as that was implied in His prediction of the betrayal. If any thought remained in their minds as to this particular point in the history of the future, it would at once be brought back and have a new prominence given to it by the statement that they were clean, but not all. It is therefore natural to think that the action of the washing had left a deep impression on them, and that they were waiting in

reverence and in some anxiety for some further words from our Lord about it.

The words which He now spoke embraced two subjects. One was an explanation and instruction, founded upon the action which He had just accomplished. Other words were connected with the warning which He had given, and which He was to repeat again, perhaps more than once, until He had finally freed Himself and His faithful Apostles from the companionship of Judas, whose presence prevented the full flow of the free and most loving revelations which He had in His Heart to make to them that evening. He had promised St. Peter that what He was doing he should know presently, though he did not know at the time, and He goes on first of all to impart this promised knowledge. This is the meaning of the first words, which, as has been said, were words of explanation, 'Know you what I have done to you? You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If then I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also. Amen, amen, I say to you, the servant is not greater than his lord, neither is the Apostle greater than He that sent him. If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them.'

There is, of course, no master or teacher who can be compared to our Lord, either in the amount of His knowledge, His absolute possession of it, or in the power and efficacy with which He communicates it. Whether as God or as Man, there is no lord who has so complete and absolute a dominion over his servants, who is so independent of any service they can render him, whose dominion is so essen-

tial and eternal, and who can confer on those who minister to him rewards like His. Moreover, He is in an especial manner our example in His Sacred Humanity, and, if even for nothing else, we should be bound to follow His example in any particular on which He insists. He says, moreover, that they are bound by their own language concerning Him, in which they acknowledged His right as their Teacher and Lord, to follow His example in this particular matter. He adds that the action He has done is not set before them as to be imitated merely as all His actions were to be imitated, but that He has especially done it for the purpose of so setting it before them. All the exercises of mutual charity and mutual humility were included in the example which He had given them, as all the corporal and spiritual works of mercy were included in the description which He had lately given of the sentence which would be delivered by Him at the last day, in the close of His discourse on the Mount of Olives. On this occasion He was indeed, as St. John tells us, full of the thought of the immense gifts which He had now received from God, as has been said. The signal act of humiliation in the washing had been a great oblation made to His Father, in which He humbled Himself to the utmost in acknowledgment of those gifts. That was the thought in His mind as regards His relation to the Father.

He now tells them that the same action had another side, in its regard to us, and that it was an example of mutual charity and humility. 'If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet.' His action was spontaneous, not required by any necessity or suggested by any desire on their part,

but as if He had simply considered what He could best do to show His homage to the Father and His love for them. And in this it was different from an act of mercy, which is usually elicited by some want or affliction or distress on the part of others. He seems to mean us to understand that we are to consider what we can do in the way of love and humility and service to others, rather for the sake of showing in them our love and gratitude to Him, than for that of supplying any need. Such must be the mutual services of the blessed Angels who have need of nothing, and yet are one to another the objects of incessant ministrations of charity, as well as to ourselves, who are so inferior to them by nature. It is in that spirit that the Saints are continually showering down upon us the bounties and favours which they obtain for us from God, though we indeed need them, and they are full of love for us. And yet the chief reason for their infinite charities is their love for God and their desire that we too may glorify and thank Him for ever. But their love and gratitude to God finds as it were a vent and relief in their mercies to us, who are His creatures, so feeble in ourselves and so greatly in need of their help. And perhaps our Lord had in His Heart the thought that His love to us was to be imitated both in its motive and in the manner of its exercise. For as He had received great gifts from God, and made that fact the motive of His humiliation, so also the Apostles were about to be raised to the dignity, as has been said, of the priests of the New Testament, and one of the most wonderful powers of that dignity which they were to receive was to be that of 'washing the feet of one another' and of all men like themselves,

by the application of the Precious Blood in the Sacrament of Penance, the ministration of which requires indeed humility and patience and perseverance and meekness, such as are to be learnt nowhere so well as from the example of our Lord at the feet of the Apostles, one of whom was after all to betray Him.

Our Lord subjoins two reflections. 'Amen, amen, I say to you, the servant is not greater than his lord, neither is the Apostle greater than He that sent him.' Perhaps our Lord foresaw that there might be many occasions in the future, when the practice of the precept which He was now laying down might seem difficult to them, and when the persons to whom He was telling them to minister, in all the humility and patience which His example suggested, might seem in themselves so unattractive and so ungrateful, that the hearts of His servants might perhaps fail them in the execution of their duty. Then would come the time when the words now spoken by Him might wake up in their hearts, and they might need the refreshment and the invigoration which would thus be supplied them. 'The servant is not greater than his master, neither is the Apostle greater than He that sent him.' He had said much the same before, when He first sent them out to preach, 'The disciple is not above the master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?'⁵

Our Lord's repetition of these words at this time would carry the thoughts of the Apostles back to

⁵ St. Matt. x. 25.

that charge which He had delivered to them early in the history, and before He had sent them out to preach for the first time. They would thus be reminded of many other things which had then been said by Him, and also of the fruitfulness of their mission, of the blessings with which they had then been laden, and the tender Providence which had guarded them from all dangers and wants. Our Lord was to refer to this before the end of the evening, and to change in some respects the directions which had then been given. It is remarkable how, on this last evening, He seems to dwell lightly upon the hard treatment which they were to receive, as He also says so little about the details of His own now imminent Passion. He seems to mention the treatment they were to receive from the world chiefly for the sake of giving them consolation, for indeed their minds were now to be occupied, during these last hours of their intercourse with Him, with more important and happier matters. The experience of the Cross was to come soon enough to them all. He was to be the great Sufferer, and He says but little of what His sufferings were to be. The words He had now said were to be enough to point out their great source of strength, their resemblance to Him in the treatment with which they were to meet.

The other reflection made by our Lord at the close of these words is that, 'If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them.' These words are understood by some writers as referring immediately and exclusively to the preceding sentences, in which our Lord had told the Apostles that the servant was not greater than his lord, nor he that is sent greater than he who sent him. But it is difficult to understand how the words, 'If you know

these things you shall be blessed if you do them,' can be understood of such a statement as that about the servant and the lord, and the Apostle and He that sent him. The words may also be understood as referring to what He had just before said, about their calling Him Master and Lord. That is, 'If you know that I am your Master and Lord, as is shown by your so calling Me, you should endeavour to gain for yourselves the blessing of those who not only call Me so, but who obey Me as a Master and Lord should be obeyed, and especially such a Master and such a Lord as I am.' And they would be reminded of His words in the Sermon on the Mount, that 'not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of My Father Who is in Heaven, he shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.'⁶ But it is natural to understand the words of the whole doctrine which our Lord had been laying down, both by example, in the action of the washing, and by word, in what He had said after that action was concluded. The whole is summed up in the words, 'If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also.' And the urgency of the lesson is enforced by the final sentence, that the servant is not greater than his lord, nor the Apostle greater than He that sent him.

It seems, then, that our Lord impresses the lesson of the washing upon them most especially, adding that if they know it—as He had said before, 'Know you what I have done to you?'—they shall be indeed blessed if they act upon their knowledge. The

⁶ St. Matt. vii. 21.

words seem to signify that they may know and understand this great lesson, but that it will be difficult for them to be always faithful to it, while, further, if they are but faithful to it, an immense blessing will rest upon them. And it is very possible that, if our Lord, as we conceive, was in this action of the washing acting parabolically, as we have said, and acting in that way perhaps for the reason that the whole doctrine of the Sacrament of Penance—which would lead, as its supplement, to that of other what may be called the semi- or quasi-sacramental applications of the cleansing power of the Precious Blood—was yet to be delivered. He would naturally use less clear language, as being more suited to the state of their knowledge on the matter of which He was speaking. The time was to come when they were to know this doctrine fully, and spend great part of their labour for Him in the application of the rich treasures of mercy placed in their hands for the salvation of men, and the words before us may convey a promise of the immense fruitfulness of the ‘ministry of reconciliation’ of which St. Paul speaks.⁷

The whole work of the Apostolical ministry in the Church and of the Church in this world, may be summed up in the imitation of this example of humility and charity in our Lord. This which we have called a quasi-sacramental, or at all events, a parabolical, action, was an act of most acceptable and pleasing homage to the Eternal Father, and may have conveyed graces quite beyond our conceptions, in winning for those who received the external washing at the hands of our Lord in good dispositions, procuring for them a very great application of the benefits which that washing signified. And our

⁷ 2 Cor. v. 18.

Lord seems further to say that the imitation of His charity and humility, on the part of His servants, will be productive of immense blessings to them and to their work.

Indeed, it is not difficult to imagine the fruits which our Lord may have looked forward to when He spoke these words. All the great work of the Apostolate in the Church, whether it addresses itself to those who are already her children, or to those who are to be brought into the fold from without, is the fruit of the Precious Blood of our Lord applied to souls, ordinarily, through the ministration of the Apostles and of those who inherit their duties. But the fruit of the Precious Blood is applied by them to the souls of men, and is not dependent, in its efficacy, on the character and agency of those who apply it. Yet we have more than once had to quote the great words of St. Paul about the Apostolate and the Christian ministry, and when we consider the picture which is there drawn of the spirit in which that ministry was carried out, and the urgency with which the Apostle speaks to the Corinthian priests, we may well imagine that our Lord had this subject in His Heart at this time, and that His words include the truth, that on the full practical imitation of the example of the Lavanda would depend historically the greatest blessing which His servants can possibly receive in this world, in the fruitfulness of the work entrusted to them. The Word of God, the sacraments, the sacred doctrine of the faith, and the other great means of grace which are put into the hands of Christian ministers to dispense, do not indeed derive their efficacy from the humility and charity of those who dispense them. That is a great theological truth. But, on the other hand, who can measure

the extent to which the Christian people have at different times been turned away from the treasures of grace, on account of the failure of those to whom the sacred ministry is committed, to imitate to the full the blessed example of charity and humility here given by our Lord!

The whole of the chequered history of the Church has two different aspects, according to the view in which it is regarded, as the success or as the failure of the Christian ministry. It may be considered as a series of magnificent victories of grace, conquering the powers of Hell and of the world, prompting the most heroic sacrifices and labours to men who have felt the truth of St. Paul's saying, 'The charity of Christ presseth us.' These sacrifices have been rewarded by the conversion of what was before a spiritual wilderness, in which devils ruled as they willed, into a garden of heavenly beauty and fertility, in which angelic virtues bloomed and flourished. That is one side of the history of the Church, and if she had achieved in this way only a tenth part of what she has actually achieved, she would have proved herself the Spouse of Christ before men and angels, for she would have shown that she had behind her the powers of the unseen world, that she held in her hands the 'healing of the nations,' and the guiding of their feet into the way of peace, and the preparation of those who are to be citizens of the eternal kingdom. But there is also another side of the same picture—sin, rebellion, disobedience to the teaching of the Church, even unto heresy, and to the authority and unity of the Church, even unto schism, and, as a consequence directly flowing from this 'lawlessness,' to use our Lord's own word, immense deficiencies of virtue among the

children of the Church, great scandals, the waxing cold of charity, the bond by which they are to be held together in one, and the impairing and enfeebling of the work in the world around her which is committed to her. There is no need to dwell on the picture further. But it must be noted that these faults and scandals in her children by no means disprove the title of the Church to be the Spouse of our Lord, for they are to be traced to disobedience to her laws and to contradictions or perversions of her teaching.

But, on the other hand, however much of the misery of the scandals, the heresies, the schisms, the worldliness, the false maxims of life and manners, the animosities, the jealousies, the national hatreds, which have so shamefully disfigured the history, may be attributed to the perversity, the obstinacy, the self-will, and the vices of those to whom the yoke of obedience to authority, however lawful, is always irksome, and who seize on every pretext for the indulgence of the spirit of independence and lawlessness, it will always remain true that there is but too much which must be set down to a failure of the ministers of the altar to rise up to the lofty example here set before them. They are 'the servants of Christ and the stewards of the mysteries of God,' as St. Paul says, 'and for the rest, it is required of stewards that one be found faithful.' He adds that it is little to him to be judged by men, but at the same time the Judge is our Lord, Who can see faults even where there is no consciousness of them. The history of the Church is full of the glorious services of her ministers. But there is also a constant undersong of complaint and reproach, not only from the enemies of the truth, but from

the saintly rulers of the Kingdom of Christ, and from other servants also of God who have flourished from time to time, and in evil days have had to support the Church against attacks which have been so often seconded by traitors within the sanctuary itself. The reproaches of some great Christian writers against some of the churchmen of their day have sometimes seemed to be echoes of our Lord's denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees. There is no such reproach on His lips now. He dwells on the bright side of the picture, though He hints at the dark. His children cannot fail to see in His words a promise of immense blessing to all those who shall in any age or in any part of the Church prove themselves faithful 'stewards,' faithful followers of the example here set them by our Lord—a promise which seems to tell us, that if once the whole body of His servants were to be faithful to that example, nothing more would be wanted to extend indefinitely the too narrow limits of His Kingdom, and make the empire of the Church co-equal in extent with the heavens which encompass the whole surface of the globe.

At this time, once again, our Lord spoke of that which we have noted as being uppermost in His mind, the presence of the traitor. Perhaps His object was now again to give Judas a loving warning that his designs were all perfectly known, and either to lead him to repentance, or to force him, as it were, to leave the Cenacle of his own accord. 'I speak not of you all. I know whom I have chosen. But that the Scriptures may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with Me shall lift up his heel against Me. At present I tell you before it come to pass, that when it shall come to pass you may

believe that I am He.' Our Lord then specially wishes them to note His declaration of His knowledge of the secret treason of Judas. He knows whom He has chosen, which may perhaps be a reference to the first 'election' of the Apostles, who were then called by our Lord—'whom He would,' as it is said, and who were no doubt at that time all worthy of the call, capable of perseverance and faithfulness to our Lord, and of gaining immense graces and glories hereafter. Since that day there had been no time when our Lord's Divine knowledge, and the infused knowledge of His human mind, had not followed all the details of the interior history of their souls. They had, perhaps, made progress, in different degrees and different directions of perfection, all of which had been noted by Him. They had no doubt had their times of greater fervour and their times of more moderate growth, their times also of trial and temptation, against which they were not supernaturally guarded in any way which deprived them of their liberty to give consent to evil. Our Lord knew them all, as He knows now the spiritual state of each Christian soul, and its history. And what He here dwells on is the mournful truth that one of them was thoroughly disloyal and corrupt, a child of Satan rather than of God, notwithstanding all his opportunities. Our Lord speaks rather of his state as one of deep ingratitude to Himself. 'But that the Scripture might be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with Me hath lift up his heel against Me,' or, as it is in the Vulgate, 'hath magnified against Me his supplantation,'⁸ that is, as it were, his tripping Me up and causing My ruin. The word in Greek is

⁸ Psalm xl. 10.

etymologically connected with the word which means 'heel,' as if the heel were used to overthrow the friend who is so supplanted, the idea being conveyed, not only of injury, but of injury coming from a friend and executed by treachery. Others understand the image of the 'heel' as simply implying the action of putting the foot on the neck of a prostrate foe.

There can be no doubt that the Psalm here quoted by our Lord was written by David at the time when his temporary overthrow by the insurrection of Absalom was imminent, and that the 'man of his peace,' the familiar friend of whom the text speaks, is Achitophel, his councillor, who betrayed his trust, and assisted in the rebellion, giving crafty and malignant advice to Absalom which might have led to the entire defeat and even death of his master. The parallel between Judas and Achitophel is more than once suggested by the Evangelists in a word or two, as when St. Matthew tells us that Judas 'went and hanged himself with a halter,' using the very words of the Septuagint version in the account of Achitophel's suicide.⁹ Moreover this Psalm may have suggested another thought to our Blessed Lord, for it continues after the verse which He here quotes: *Tu autem, Domine, miserere mei, et resuscita me, et retribuas eis*, &c. That is, it is a prophecy of the Resurrection as well as of the treachery which brought about the Passion. This might have been another silent warning to Judas, if he understood the allusion as a sign that his treachery was not unknown to our Lord, in the first place, and that its issue would be as fatal to its author as the treachery of Achitophel was to him. And there was also a tenderness in the

⁹ 2 Kings xvii. 23; St. Matt. xxvii. 5.

words which spoke so affectionately of the traitor, as 'the man of My peace, in whom I hoped.' The language is still that of affectionate and mournful remonstrance, but we can trace the gradual increase of severity in our Lord's words to and concerning Judas. For each tender act or word was an appeal, as has been said, to whatever love might perhaps be lingering in the traitor's heart, or might at all events be revived therein. It was an appeal, to reject which implied an increase of obduracy. This word about the 'man of My peace' comes soon after the action of our Lord kneeling at his feet, and when Judas had resisted that most loving entreaty his heart is again assailed, as it were, by the gentle way in which his crime is spoken of. There had been nothing before to point out one as the traitor who had been peculiarly trusted by our Lord, and if Judas understood the reference to Achitophel, that would bring back to his mind all the love of David for that false friend and the sorrow which his falsehood had caused. But as we go in the history, we find more sternness and directness, and at last menace, in the words used by our Lord.

'At present I tell you before it came to pass that when it shall come to pass ye may believe that I am He.' It was our Lord's desire that His foreknowledge of the treachery of Judas should be known to His disciples, and this was one reason for His speaking so openly of it, in order that, when the treachery came about, their faith in our Lord might be confirmed rather than shaken, much in the same way as the scandals and schisms in the Church become confirmations to our faith, because they have been foretold by Him. We conclude from the fact that it is so, that it is not on account of any weakness on our

Lord's part, or because He fails in His promises, that these things happen, but because He has chosen not to prevent them, though they offend Him so grievously, rather than do violence to human liberty by hindering them by an act of power, and for other reasons. In this sense all that happened in His Passion, having been foretold by our Lord, is an argument that He is a Divine Messenger, because He foretold it, and an argument that He is God, because whatever He said of Himself as such must be true. And our Lord seems to insist upon the particular truth, that He was the Messiah or God Incarnate, as proved by the verification of His prophecy as to His own betrayal by Judas, or by one of the Twelve. For perhaps the greatest temptation to the faith of the Apostles at that moment in the Garden was likely to be the doubt whether He that allowed Himself to fall so completely into the power of His enemies, and by the instrumentality of one of themselves, could be the Divine Person that they had believed Him to be. Thus He provided for them, at that very darkest moment, a confirmation of their faith, which might be their support in all their trials during the course of the Passion itself. The betrayal would prove that He knew all things beforehand, and that God was with Him, and, in consequence, that what He had said of Himself was true, with the truth of God Himself.

He adds a few words which are connected in sense with what He had just before said about the servant not being greater than his master, nor the Apostle greater than He that sent him. It seems that the great injunction to humility and charity which was conveyed in the example which He had set them in the washing of the feet, might possibly

be objected to, on the ground that it might lower them in the eyes of those to whom they were to minister, as if it might breed some contempt towards them. Our Lord seems to meet this objection in the words before us, assuring them that the fact that they acted as He acted could bring on them no loss of dignity, as they would always bear the character of His envoy. 'Amen, amen, I say to you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me.' Our Lord was not distinguished in outward appearance from other men, though probably, the more pure were the hearts of those who looked upon Him, the more did the invisible majesty and graciousness in Him make themselves felt. It was enough for the Apostles to be sure that their office as His messengers would always secure them the respect and reverence of those for whom they laboured, which certainly they could never lose by any humiliation, meekness, or condescension, in which they had His example to follow and were faithful to that example. The commentators who explain this passage in this way, take the example of humility which is conveyed in the action of the washing as if it were one to which objection might be made on the score of the contempt which it might bring on the priests of the Church if it were imitated exactly, and they understand the words before us as if our Lord meant by them to answer the objection by saying that, as representing Him, they could never lose any true estimation to which they might be entitled.

CHAPTER V.

The Departure of Judas.

St. Matt. xxvi. 21—25 ; St. Mark xiv. 18—21 ; St. John xiii. 21—30 ;
Story of the Gospels, § 152.

WE have noticed in the last chapter certain manifestations, in our Lord's words and actions, of an oppressing sense of grief and discomfort at the presence of the traitor Judas, who was now about to consummate his perfidy. The time was now at hand when, if he was to be at leisure to carry out his plans for the apprehension of his Master, he must be set free to leave the Cenacle in order to make his arrangements with his new confederates, the enemies of our Lord. On the other hand, the acts which our Lord was preparing to do and the gifts He meant to bestow on the Apostles and the Church during the remainder of this evening, were so momentous and important, so full too of the choicest spiritual mysteries and treasures, that the presence of Judas during the whole of them would naturally be an immense burthen to the Sacred Heart, even if there were no other considerations to render the dismissal of the traitor opportune or necessary. It was now some time since the night had begun, and the gretest and most sublime of the Christian mysteries had yet to be instituted. We may judge of the discomfort which our Lord now suffered from the language of the Evangelists, as well as from His

own words, and the great relief which He expressed as soon as Judas had departed.

For the poor miserable Apostle himself, who had now ended by resisting in heart the appeal made to him by our Lord in washing his feet, and the warnings conveyed in what He had said after that ceremony, it could be nothing but a great relief to find himself sent out of the Cenacle with honour. For Judas must have learnt from our Lord's words that He was perfectly cognizant of his treachery, and he must have feared that He no longer intended to keep it to Himself. It is probable that Judas would think much of the danger which he feared, less of the protection which he was certain to receive from our Lord Himself. For it is one of the darkest parts of the state of mind that Satan takes care to produce in his victims, that they come to think so little of the mercifulness and tenderness of God. Judas might also miscalculate the danger in which he might find himself from the indignation of the other Apostles. It is true that we see a momentary burst of anger in St. Peter, when he saw his Lord surrounded by the armed band in the Garden, and that he drew his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the High Priest. There is nothing of the same kind in the other Apostles, and we know that our Lord Himself almost apologized for that act of violence, and did away with its effect by a miracle. Probably the predominant feeling in the minds of the Apostles, when our Lord made His announcement that some one with whom He was very familiar, and even one of themselves, should betray Him, was far more of sorrow and compassion than of revenge, or of a desire to punish the traitor. And our Lord's own de-

meanour to Judas all through had been marked by so much of tenderness, that the more the poor traitor came to know that his secret was not hidden from his Master, the more ought he to have felt secure that He at least would take no part either in preventing or punishing his treachery, and that he was safer with his Master and His Apostles than he would have been with Annas and Caiphas, if he had broken faith with them. Indeed, the knowledge that his design was not hidden from our Lord ought to have brought Judas to His feet in contrite confession. In one of the Psalms God addresses the wicked man, saying, 'Thou thoughtest unjustly that I shall be like unto thee,'¹ and we see this verified in the enemies of God, who expect to be dealt with by Him as they would deal with others who have offended, or insulted, or deserted them, if they had the power. Such men are naturally suspicious as well as vindictive, and they transfer their own maxims of conduct to God.

But, even without the fears that may now have risen in his mind, it must, as we have said, have been the greatest torment imaginable to Judas to find himself constrained to remain in our Lord's company. There must also have been present to him the fear that he might not have the opportunity to which he was looking forward, of keeping his compact with the Chief Priests. He must have been eagerly watching for some occasion on which he could withdraw from the Cenacle without incurring suspicion. We cannot tell how far the faith in our Lord's Divinity, which he probably once had, lingered in his mind, but he must have felt agony in His presence, like that of a demoniac in the presence

¹ Psalm l. 20.

of the Blessed Sacrament. Sad indeed it may be to think that the kindest thing which our Lord could now do to Judas was to send him away quietly, without arousing any suspicion against him. Still it is to be sometimes remembered by those who are our Lord's ministers, that they are to act on certain occasions on the precept which He laid down in the Sermon on the Mount, and that it is well to reserve the inestimable boons of the sacraments from those who are certain to profane them, especially when, as in the case before us, there is no danger of scandal.

Our Lord came to his relief in a manner which he did not expect. He appears to have acted in this instance on the rule referred to, not to throw pearls before swine, or to give what is holy unto dogs. It was an act of great mercy to free Judas from the torment which he must have been suffering, but it was also an act of reverence for holy things and zeal for the honour of His Father. It was an act of great mercy to Judas. For when a man is hardened in guilt, and there is no hope of converting him, it is well to deprive him of the occasion of plunging deeper and deeper in the abyss of perdition. Our Lord knew what Judas did not, nor any one of the Apostles—that He was about, in the remaining hours of that Thursday night, to institute the Blessed Sacrament, and, as tradition tells us, other sacraments also—if not the whole seven, at least such as had a direct connection with, and were necessary for, that one, such as the Sacrament of Orders. For we are taught that the Apostles were then made Priests of the New Testament. If Judas had then been present with the others, he must either have made a sacrilegious Communion, or he must have refused It, and he must

either have been ordained sacrilegiously, or have openly and violently broken away.

Then, besides the enormous sins which Judas might have committed, the peaceful and beautiful joys of that evening must have been disturbed by a great scandal, and the minds of the blessed company gathered around our Lord must have received a shock of alarm and perplexity, instead of being fortified by our Lord's parting acts and words, for the great storm which was so soon to burst upon them. We cannot but think that these last considerations may have had great weight in determining our Lord's action on this occasion. He was always perfectly calm and just and considerate, and provided, in the ineffable wisdom of His most tender and, so to say, reverential Providence, for a thousand dangers and risks of which others could not dream. We cannot always be certain in our poor conjectures at the interpretation of His choices. But we have seen that He chose to manifest His discomfort at the presence of Judas, as He manifested the trouble of His Soul at the beginning of the Agony, and we may safely think that He did this with the purpose of leading up to the exit of the traitor. After that exit, there is no more trace of disquiet in the history of this evening in the Cenacle. It seems likely, therefore, that our Lord manifested His discomfort for the sake of bringing about the departure of Judas, and that He ceased to speak of it when Judas had departed.

We may look on this disquiet in our Lord, of which the Gospels tell us, as having been occasioned by more than one motive, and manifested for the purpose we have named. The principle laid down in the Sermon on the Mount may have many appli-

cations, and among them may surely be classed the rule for dealing with cases similar to this of Judas, when a great act of profanation of holy things may be prevented, without the risk of incurring any other offence to God, such as the violation of the seal of Confession on the part of some one cognizant of the evil intention of the person whose crime is thus prevented, and many other such dangers. Our Lord was very keen for the honour of God, and it is on occasion of an action of His in defence of that honour, in the case of the material Temple, that His disciples were reminded of the verse in the Psalm which says, 'that the zeal of God's house had eaten Him up.' Alas! He could look forward to countless profanations of His honour in the Blessed Sacrament, which He was not to interfere miraculously to hinder, and which His ministers also are obliged not to hinder, even when they have power of doing so, for fear of offending Him in other ways, as in the instance just now alluded to. But when such a profanation may be certainly prevented without any danger of what is in any way forbidden, it would seem that we are bound, if we can, to hinder it, not only for the saving of a soul from sin, but for the honour of God which will be outraged by the profanation. This is a principle distinct from that of which we may speak presently, the diminution as far as possible of the number of grievous sins on the part of those who are already great sinners. We conceive that our Blessed Lord may have acted on this law as regards the possible dishonour to God by the sacrilegious Communion which Judas might have been almost obliged to make, if he had remained in the Cenacle, and thus prevented the first institution of the Blessed Eucharistic

Banquet from being marred by such a crime. We may speak of the other motive presently on which we may suppose our Lord to have also acted.

‘And when He had said these things, and whilst they were at table and eating, Jesus was troubled in spirit, and He testified, and said, Amen, amen, I say to you, that one of you that eateth with Me shall betray Me, is about to betray Me. The disciples therefore looked upon one another, doubting of whom He spoke. And they, being very much troubled, began to be sorrowful, and began to say to Him, one by one, they began every one to say, Is it I, Lord? But He answering said to them, One of the Twelve, that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, he that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me. And the Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him, according to that which is determined, but wo to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed. It were better for him that that man had not been born.’ We may consider these words in their due order.

It is plain, in the first place, that the ‘trouble in spirit’ which our Lord now suffered, was, like the other emotions of the same kind which are recorded of Him, a perfectly deliberate and voluntary feeling, which He chose, then and there, to experience and also to manifest. It was a natural and legitimate suffering which His Sacred Human Nature underwent at the fitting time, that He might show Himself to be man like any one of the children of Adam, that He might suffer it for our sakes, to win us grace under our own sufferings of the same kind, and set us an example of patience and forgiveness of the most atrocious and keenly-felt injuries. It enables us to understand what was the greatest part of the

Passion itself, the affliction caused to our Lord by sins of ingratitude, disloyalty, unfaithfulness, the pain of which may be to Him even greater than that caused by grosser and coarser violations of the commandments, which have their root in sensuality, ambition, anger, or avarice, as well as the keen sensitiveness which exposes Him to so much exquisite pain, in consequence of the close familiar relations to Him in which so many are placed, as His priests or His spouses vowed to Him in religion. The existence of such relations necessitates the possibility of these great treasons, as also of the intense joy which He feels in those who are loyal to Him. Over and over again our Lord dwells on the fact of the injuries He suffered in this way, complaining, as it seems, of them, more sorely than of all the cruelties of His enemies. St. Luke tells us that here He added those words which the other Evangelists omit, 'Behold, the hand of him who betrayeth Me is on the table with Me.' The revelation here made, then, is of the tenderness of the Sacred Heart, and He dwells more on the misery of this lost friend, than on the sufferings to Himself entailed by his treachery.

As we have seen, the first hint which our Lord had given as to the meditated treachery of Judas, had been in the words He said at the washing of the feet, when He made a parabolic distinction, as we suppose, between greater and lesser sins, and declared the Apostles in general to be clean, in the sense in which He used the words, 'but not all.' St. John says that He knew whom He had chosen, and that He meant to show His foreknowledge as to this matter for the confirmation of the faith of the rest afterwards. Then, soon after, our Lord quoted

the Psalm about the treachery of David's familiar friend, using words which brought out more pointedly the peculiar pang which the treason of Judas caused to His Heart. This was a still plainer declaration to the traitor that his crime was not hidden. Then He spoke still more plainly, saying that one of them should betray Him. This brought about the consternation of the Apostles, and the plaintive questioning of each, 'Is it I?' Our Lord then made only a general answer, as we have said. But He insisted still on the black character of the act of treason, of one who ate with Him, and whose hand was with His in the dish. And then finally, He uttered the words of doom on the false Apostle, 'Wo to him by whom the Son of Man is betrayed.' The Providence of the Father permitted the wickedness, in order that what had been determined in the Divine Counsels, and announced as future in the Sacred Scriptures, might be done for the bringing about the salvation of mankind. That would not take away the guilt of the sin, nor its punishment. 'It were better for him if that man had not been born.'

Perhaps the words here used by our Lord were an almost proverbial expression with the Jews, as we find the holy Job speaking so strongly against the day of his nativity. But if they are taken literally and in their plain meaning, they seem to imply, though not unmistakeably, that our Lord foresaw the final perdition of Judas, whom, in His prayer to the Father, with which the sayings and doings of this evening in the Cenacle are closed by St. John, He calls the 'son of perdition,' because he was already far advanced on the road to perdition, and our Lord knew that he was to put the seal to his former sins by the crowning crime of despairing

impenitence. What our Lord says is, that He has lost none of those whom His Father had given Him, for whom it is that He is making His prayer, which has always been considered as of especial efficacy, and as Judas was already gone from the flock, it was well that he should be excluded. In somewhat the same way our Lord, further on in that prayer, says, that He is not praying for the world, that is, as it seems, that He does not include it in that special prayer.

But if the words of which we are speaking are taken in their strict sense, they are a gentle and indulgent sentence on the apostate Apostle. For Judas had been born in original sin, which had not been cancelled at the moment of his birth, and our Lord therefore only affirms positively concerning him that it would have been better for him to die before he was born. He would then have contracted the guilt of no actual sin of his own, and, by the same fact, have been incapable of entering Heaven, because of the sentence passed on all the children of Adam. He would have lost the possibility of gaining Heaven, but he would not have incurred any actual sin.

Alas! the case of many thousands of men in each generation may be worse than it would have been, if they had no doom heavier than that of unregenerate infants. Our Lord, Who knows all the inestimable loss which is entailed in the incapacity of such infants to enjoy the sight of God in Heaven, puts this as a happy alternative, in comparison to the lot of those who, having been made children of the Kingdom of God, are banished from it for ever, with the additional burthen to bear of their own actual sins throughout all eternity. It would have

been better for such souls to have to bear simply the pain of loss, great as that is, rather than to have to bear that pain of loss, which it is their own personal and actual fault to have incurred, and the awful punishments of the pain of sense as well. The case of Judas, therefore, may have been far worse than the mere words imply. But the words were enough to arouse him, if his will had not been so fixed in evil, by the grace of holy fear which, in so many cases, God uses as the instrument of a true conversion. In the case of actual sinners who lose God through all eternity, the loss is not the simple privation of an ineffable bliss which they have never had a title to and never any knowledge of. It is the wilful waste of all the wonderful mercies of God their Redeemer and their Sanctifier, of Whom they must at least have known something, and thrown away what they have known. It is indeed a grievous loss to any Christians, in proportion to the graces which have been lavished upon them. What then must it have been for our Lord to pronounce this doom upon an Apostle whom He had taken to His Sacred Heart, chosen as His own to the highest rank among the children of Adam, and who was to give that Heart the deepest wound of any that He was to receive from the race He came to save?

Judas must have been accustomed to reverence and believe willingly whatever he heard our Lord say in the way of prediction. His long intercourse with our Lord must have generated him many good habits, especially, perhaps, habits of the intelligence, and we see the working of these habits to the end, as in his incomplete penitence, and his attempt at restitution of the fame of our Lord, in his last dealings with the Chief Priests. Thus even these

last denunciations of him by His Master must be numbered among the loving struggles with him, hopeless as the case may have been. Probably our Lord had kept this appeal to his fears for the last, nor till He saw that this also was of no avail did He proceed to separate him at once from His company. As for the Apostles, it was probably a thought that had never occurred to them, that it should be so. They had received repeated warnings about the Passion, as we have seen, from the date of Peter's confession of our Lord's Divinity. But we are told that the words made very little impression upon them. There was some mention made by our Lord of the betrayal, almost from the first, in these warnings, but there was no one specified as the person who was to be guilty of this disloyalty, and only at the last had our Lord spoken quite distinctly, and He had never told them before this moment that it was to be one of the Apostles. Each one probably felt at least as sure of his brethren as he did of himself, and although each one may have feared his own weakness in the hour of trial, no one but the traitor himself could have thought of the treachery as possible in the Apostolic body. One of the first movements among imperfect persons on such an occasion would have been an inclination to disclaim it for himself and throw the blame on others, for each one among such persons would secretly think less well of others than of himself.

There is nothing of that kind here. Their first impression was of deep overwhelming grief. 'They began,' says St. Mark, doubtless speaking after the recollections of St. Peter, 'to be sorrowful and to say to Him one by one,' 'each of them,' adds St. Matthew, 'Can it be I, Lord?' St. John tells

us that they looked on one another in doubt, and wondering of whom He could be speaking, and St. Luke adds the last circumstance, that they began to question among themselves who of them it was who was about to do this. Naturally in a small number, to assure one or two or more that they were not to fall, was impossible, without danger of wounding others. So He gave no distinct answer to the questions thus put. 'He answered them, One of the Twelve who dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me, the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table.' And then, as we may suppose after a little delay, during which time they were occupied in their consternation and questioning among themselves, He adds the final doom of which we have spoken over the poor traitor, without yet specifying him in any way. 'And the Son of Man goeth indeed as it is written of Him, according to that which is determined, but yet, wo to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed. It were better for him if that man had not been born.'

There are few more touching incidents in the Gospel history than this simple questioning of our Lord by the Apostles. It seems to show the extremely deep and painful impression made on them by what they had heard. It is plain that they could not doubt or question that these words would be fulfilled. At the same time their question put sorrowfully by each one, as it seems, shows their deep humility and consciousness of their own weakness. Nothing was further from their thoughts than such treachery, and yet they could not confide in themselves against His assertion of what was to be. The betrayal of their Master by one of them-

selves seemed monstrous, it could only come about by some terrible accident over which they could have no control, as men are sometimes seized by sudden impulses of what appears madness, prompting them to do or say something most alien to their natural thought. St. Matthew says 'every one,' and he goes on to specify Judas, and St. Mark says that they put the question to our Lord one by one. They tell us nothing of any answer made by our Lord to any one, except to Judas. We may therefore suppose that the answer to them was commonly general, while that to Judas was made in a low voice, unheard by the others, especially as St. John goes on to relate the incident of St. Peter's question to himself, and our Lord's revelation of the secret to him. The impression left by the whole description is that they were thunderstruck by our Lord's words, and too deeply grieved, and too humble and charitable, for any mutual accusation among themselves.

'Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of the disciples whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter beckoned to him and said to him, Who is it of whom He speaketh? He therefore leaning on the breast of Jesus saith to Him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped. And when He had dipped the bread He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.' It is well known that the custom of the ancients of reclining at their meals made it natural for one to have his head, when they lay side by side, in such a position as easily to lean on the breast of the other next to him. It would be natural also for any one who loved another with an especially tender love, to have that other placed by his side in this way, and this is probably the account to be given of the

attitude of St. John. For he was known among the Apostles as the disciple 'whom Jesus loved,' that is, He was fond of him in a special way, for many reasons that are given in the Christian writers. For St. John was the youngest of the Apostles, as it were the Benjamin of the company, he was our Lord's own kinsman, he had come to the company of our Lord before he had had time to marry, and so was dear to him on account of his virginity, and these advantages had been made the foundation in his character of a very singular purity and close devotion to his Master. One old tradition makes him the bridegroom in the marriage-feast at Cana, who after the miracle of the water that was changed into wine, consecrated himself in the state of virginity to God, together with his bride. This story is probably grounded on the fact that he relates the miracle as if he had known all that the bridegroom must have known. In any case he was, we may well be certain, fit, as far as man could be fit, to enjoy the special affection and to share the thoughts of our Lord which were kept secret from others.

St. Peter beckoned to him, being probably not far off at the table, and asked him of whom our Lord was speaking, as if he either knew or could easily ask without its being observed. And then St. John lovingly leant back on our Lord's breast, not to ask, as he had perhaps asked already, 'Lord, is it I?' but the other question, 'Lord, who is it?' And Jesus answered, 'He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped.' For a part of the Paschal banquet consisted of a sort of broth or sauce, which could only be conveyed to the mouth by bread that was dipped in it, and it was a special mark of confidence and

affection for one to do this for another. Some time in the course of the questioning of the Apostles, as St. Matthew seems to tell us, Judas had asked our Lord, as to himself, the same question with the others, and our Lord had softly answered him, 'Thou hast said it.' St. John leaves out what his predecessor had already mentioned, but, carrying on his own narrative as to Judas, mentions the giving of the morsel from the dish, and adds that, when he had received it, the traitor immediately left the table.

'And after the morsel, Satan entered into him.' We have already been told that Satan had put it into his heart to betray our Lord, but now, as it seems, a further step was taken in the ruin of this miserable man, and Satan took more completely possession of him and became more entirely the master of his will, without however destroying his liberty or taking away the possibility of his return to grace. Judas had entered the Cenacle with the evil design already formed in his heart. What had passed since that moment had served to harden him and make him desperate in his design. The most loving and tender humiliation, which our Lord had taken on Himself in the washing of the feet, might have moved him if he had not been so hardened. But his state of mind had by this time become one of dislike and even a kind of hatred of his Master, Who was lavishing so much tenderness upon him. Perhaps he would not forgive the rebuke which he had received from our Lord at the supper at Bethany, or he could not brook the subsequent indications which he had seen of want of trust. The language of our Lord about his treachery after the washing seemed worse, or he may have been in extreme fear that the moment was at hand when he

would be named before all as the traitor. In any case, the frequent resistance which he had made to the graces now offered him, to the suggestions and hints understood by himself alone, and the appeal of which he was continually the object from our Lord, could not but harden him more and more if they did not soften him. So that when the last action of our Lord in giving him the morsel produced in his heart no relenting, Satan may have been permitted to master him more completely and make him entirely his tool, by the Providence of God, for bringing about through the enormous wickedness to which he prompted him, and thus contributing to the salvation of the world.

‘And Jesus said to him, That which thou dost, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew to what purpose He said this unto him. For some thought, because Judas had the purse, that Jesus had said to him, Buy those things which we have need of for the festival-day, or that he should give something to the poor.’ Judas, being entrusted with the care of the temporal affairs of the little community formed of our Lord and His Apostles, was probably looked upon by the others as the one person among them who could not be an object of suspicion. The words which were now addressed to him were such as they may often have heard before, when our Lord wished to give him some special directions, and therefore they could not excite any suspicion. They were in themselves naturally capable of the interpretation which, as St. John tells us, was put upon them. The duties of Judas were just those of providing for the daily needs of the community, and of distributing the alms received for the poor. Moreover, the last action of our Lord might easily be understood as a

matter of special confidence, and almost as a declaration that whoever was to be the traitor, it could not be Judas. Our Lord acted with perfect simplicity, for everything that He did and said conveyed a fresh appeal to that obdurate heart to lay aside its malice and make its peace with its Lord. And yet, so marvellously was all contrived in the Providence of God, that the whole incident enabled our Lord to dismiss Judas, or rather, to permit him to depart, without the least shadow of suspicion resting upon him from what had been done. Putting aside the revelation that was made privately to St. John, if Judas had been struck with sudden penitence at the moment after his departure, and had secretly sought for pardon and peace, he might have returned to the Apostolic company after his forgiveness without any one of his brethren having suspected him of his criminal design.

At the same time, the words of our Lord must have conveyed to Judas a renewed assurance that His Master was most perfectly aware of the design he had conceived, and of the compact he had made with regard to its execution. It conveyed to him also that our Lord did not intend to exert His power to prevent it, though He had striven with the utmost charity to save His Apostle from the guilt in which it would involve him. It was a kind of permission in this sense, and even an intimation of eagerness to see the wickedness executed, for the sake of the result that would issue from it to the glory of God. It was not out of any love for His Master that Judas had felt himself hindered from acting on his design before this. But we have seen that our Lord had so arranged the circumstances under which they had come to the Cenacle, that Judas had

had no opportunity till now of letting the Chief Priests know where our Lord was, and so collecting the force with which they intended to seize His Person. Now our Lord seems to tell him that He did not wish to hinder him any longer. He might leave the Cenacle in peace, or in apparent peace. The time was very short, and as our Lord, in the Providence of God, intended to defeat the plan of the Chief Priests that His Sacrifice was not to be consummated on the feast-day, so He now let Judas loose, as it were, on Himself in time, in order that His trial and condemnation and all that He foresaw was to happen between this evening and the next night might be brought about, and the whole that had been decreed completed before the setting of the sun on the next day. These may be some of the meanings of these memorable words to Judas, 'That which thou dost, do quickly.'

The motives under which our Lord acted thus may not have been conveyed in the words which He spoke to Judas. We have already pointed out that it was out of great mercy to Judas, if it was so, that our Lord spoke these words which set him free to leave the Cenacle without suspicion, because he was thus saved from the profanations and sacrileges which he would have been forced to commit if he had remained among the Apostles during the sacred acts which were to come. It has been already said that if one of our Lord's saints in any time of the Church, for the occasions very frequently occur, is conscious that one who is under his authority or influence is about to have the opportunity of committing an enormous sin, an opportunity which he has not contemplated beforehand, but under which he is morally sure to fall, the saint of whom we speak

would feel bound to extricate the other from the danger which would certainly bring so much ruin to his soul. This obligation would be felt, as we have hinted above, even when the sin which might be hindered was of a different class from the sin of some sacrilegious profanation. If, for instance, a man is burning with anger against one whom he thinks his enemy, on whom he even thinks himself bound to take vengeance by murdering him, and his friend knows that, if he walks along a certain road, he will be sure to meet his victim unarmed and in a condition which will place him entirely in his power, he would, if it were possible to him, give him some direction or order which would save him from thus meeting the other. All the more would the saint feel bound to do this, if there was no possible danger, to the man whom he was thus diverting from sin, of losing his character by obedience to the suggestion given to him, or of incurring loss in any way whatsoever. Nay, it might even be the saint's instinct to let him go into some possible danger of a lesser kind and degree, if that were the only way open to him of saving him from the certainty of committing the crime of murder.

We may venture, therefore, to enter into the Sacred Heart of our Lord and contemplate the exceeding charity and the tender wisdom with which He appears to have dealt in this last scene of their intercourse with the miserable Apostle who was to betray Him. He made effort after effort to save him from the crime which he was bent upon, bearing with him to the utmost, and sparing him in every possible way the disgrace which would befall him as soon as it was known how ungratefully and per-

fidiously he was acting. It would have been as easy for our Lord to speak of his treachery at the beginning of the Paschal Supper as later, and He could have found ways enough for his dismissal at one time as at another. But He chose to let him see the deep and poignant pain which he was causing His Heart, and He let that sight work on him, if perchance it might have touched him.

It may be thought that the same holy reasons which we have supposed to have guided our Lord in sending him away when He did, might have induced Him to dismiss Judas before the beautiful ceremony of the washing of the feet. But it may have been a different thing to let him be present at the Lavanda on the one hand, and at the institution of the Blessed Sacrament on the other. The Lavanda was an appeal to his hardened soul which might have softened it, and it was an additional feature in the great humiliation which our Lord then took up, that He should humble Himself at the feet of an Apostle who had already in heart betrayed Him and taken a part in His murder. There was a different character, as we have pointed out, about the sacred rites which were to follow, in which no one could partake without sacrilege who did not do so with a pure, at least, a contrite heart. Our Lord's meaning in the Lavanda was to produce those acts of sincere contrition and self-purification in all the disciples which might fit them for the reception of the great Sacrament which was to follow. He had said then, 'Ye are clean, but not all,' and these words seem to imply that one who was not now clean, after this opportunity of reconciliation, had better be removed if he could be got rid of without exposure. Our Lord in letting Judas

go when He did, did not change the merciful line of conduct which He had hitherto adopted towards him. He gave to that poor soul the best that it was, by its own obstinacy in evil, capable of receiving at His hands, for He gave it, sorrowfully indeed, the freedom for which it longed and the occasion of avoiding a certain number of most heinous sins, which would have added throughout all eternity to the weight of its punishment and its misery. All through our Lord is our example, merciful and wise in His attempts to save the traitor, merciful and wise still in sparing him that further aggravation of the sin into which he was about to plunge, and preserving carefully the honour of His Father, which was in danger from the possible profanations of His sacraments.

NOTE.

On the morsel given to Judas by our Blessed Lord before the departure of the former from the Cenacle.

The opinion, that Judas received the Holy Communion from the hands of our Blessed Lord, along with the other Apostles, on the night of Holy Thursday, has been so common in the Church, and is supported by the authority of so many great names, that, although it cannot be said to be universal or general, still it may seem fitting that something should be said of the reasons which induce us to depart from it in the present work, which does not in general profess to deal even shortly with controversies of the kind, except by mentioning in passing what may seem necessary on such subjects for the information of the reader, without however examining in detail the authorities and arguments on the other side. It is not our purpose to do this here. But it may be useful to explain

the grounds on which the opinion of which we speak has been apparently founded, apart from the question of the authority of this or that great writer.

The question, if it is so to be considered, is a very simple one. It is in truth whether a careful study of the Harmony of the Gospels, rightly conducted, leads to the belief that Judas left the Cenacle, as St. John informs us, before or after the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. The incident to which we refer is placed where it is in our narrative for the very reason that it seems to us undoubtedly to have happened before that institution, and because the statement of St. John requires that the departure of Judas from the Cenacle was immediately consequent on his reception from the hand of our Lord of the morsel in question. The whole narrative to which it belongs is continuous—the washing of the feet, the remark about the traitor, the declaration by our Lord that he should be one of the Twelve, the confusion and perplexity which ensued among them, the questioning of our Lord by them one by one, ‘Lord, is it I?’ our Lord’s general answer, then the question asked by St. John at the request of St. Peter, the answer of our Lord, and the giving of the morsel to Judas, with the instruction, ‘What thou dost, do quickly!’ and his exit—all hangs together, so that there seems to be no break between the incidents from first to last. Moreover, the washing of the feet has always been considered as an early incident in the evening, and as having been intended, partly at least, as a preparation of the souls of the Apostles for the coming Banquet of the Blessed Sacrament. It is therefore inconvenient, to say the least, to suppose that the Blessed Sacrament had been instituted before the washing began.

We are obliged to speak of the date of this institution as unfixed by any positive statement of any one of the Evangelists, for a reason which has often been mentioned in these pages. That reason is that the only one of the four who gives anything like a detailed and consecutive account of the proceedings of that evening, does not mention among them the institution itself, although it is evident that he more than once alludes to it, and that he has it before his mind as at least one of the most

important incidents of the evening. For it had already been mentioned by three other Evangelists, and, indeed, is one of the very few incidents which they do mention. As far as Judas is concerned, the other Evangelists say nothing about his presence or absence in connection with the institution, and, if we had nothing but their narratives before us, we might even conclude that Judas went with our Lord and the other Apostles to the Garden of Gethsemani.

It is needless to say—what has an important bearing on the opinion of which we speak—that there is not a trace in the Evangelists of the supposition, which is almost necessary if this opinion be true, that Judas received the Blessed Sacrament apart from the rest of the Apostles, at a time when they were engaged in an animated and excited conversation as to who it was that was to be the traitor—the answer to that question being furnished secretly to St. John by our Lord by His action in communicating Judas.

It is far from probable that the opinion of which we speak would have prevailed so much in the Church, merely from the silence of the three first Evangelists as to any departure of Judas from the company of our Lord. He must have left the rest at some time, and at an interval before the consummation of his treason, long enough to give time for the arrangements that were required for the collection of the large band with whom he afterwards proceeded to the Garden. We should naturally allow a considerable space for this, but the Evangelists are absolutely silent on the matter. St. John, however, comes in here, as he does elsewhere, to fill up the gap in our information, and he tells us the incident of the question put by himself at the request of St. Peter to our Blessed Lord: ‘Lord, who is it?’ and our Lord’s answer to him that it was he to whom He Himself would presently ‘reach bread dipped.’ St. John goes on, as we know, to tell us that He did this, apparently at once, by dipping a piece of bread in broth and giving it to Judas, saying, ‘What thou dost, do quickly,’ and he tells us further that Judas, receiving the morsel, Satan entered into him, and that he went out immediately. The opinion of which we are

speaking, about the Communion of Judas, seems to be founded on this incident, and it would be almost impossible to enumerate the preachers and writers who have applied the text in this way, especially in sermons on the subject of bad Communion, the words seeming to furnish so apt an illustration of the misery and wickedness of such profanations. If this passage did not exist in the text of St. John, it is quite possible that Judas might have been quoted by some as an instance of such a profanation, but his case might not have been so conspicuous or seemed to be so pointedly put before us in Sacred Scripture. It would have been inferred from the silence of the Evangelists as to his having left the Cenacle before the others. It is the fact that we are told, that after the morsel Satan entered into him, that makes him the commonly quoted example of a sacrilegious Communion.

But if we examine the text of St. John we shall find this to be an example of the mistake which sometimes is made by forgetting the context in which a certain statement is found. It is clear that here St. John is careful, as he is all through, to mention a detail valuable in itself, which he found omitted in the histories of the Passion which had preceded his own. It had not been stated by any one of those who preceded him, how and when it was that Judas had been separated from the other Apostles, although this was a matter obviously requiring explanation. It must have been tolerably early in the night, for the preparations for the arrest of our Lord must have taken some time, and if Judas had been missed after our Lord had uttered His prediction that one of the Twelve was to betray Him, it would at once have given the alarm to the rest, unless our Lord had taken the charitable precaution of sending him away in the manner He did, so as not to cause any suspicion. This is therefore a most necessary and valuable addition to the history, explaining to us what would otherwise be inexplicable, and it tells us among other things, that Judas was sent forth in the manner which we know, and that this was at a time of the night when it was natural for the Apostles to think that he had some business to transact and abundant time in which to do it. It therefore could not have been very late.

Further it may be observed that the whole narrative of St. John seems entirely to forbid the supposition that what our Lord gave to Judas was the Blessed Sacrament. If it had been so, it would have been altogether out of place in the story of St. John, who of set purpose omits any account at all of the institution and celebration of the Blessed Eucharist, after which, if Judas had been present, he would have communicated in his turn with the rest. On this supposition, St. John must have omitted altogether the Communion of the other Apostles and mentioned that of Judas. Moreover, the sop or morsel which was given to Judas was given on purpose to mark him out from the rest. Our Lord did what He did for this especial purpose. How would it have been possible to distinguish one of the Twelve from the rest by giving him what was given to all equally, and, as it is natural to suppose, at the same time? The Blessed Sacrament was given to Peter and John and all the rest. How could our Lord say that the traitor was to be known by His giving It to him?

The truth seems more likely to be in the other direction. The other Evangelists had left the question that might be asked, as to the Communion or non-Communion of the traitor, unsolved, except that they had not mentioned when he left the company, though they imply that he must have left it. St. John may have had many reasons, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, for the addition to the history with which we are concerned. One of them may probably have been directly to exclude the opinion which we are discussing. He may have distinctly wished that the Church should know, not only that Judas left the Cenacle, but that he left it before the institution of the Blessed Eucharist. And he may have mentioned the incident of the sop or morsel given to Judas by our Lord expressly for the purpose of excluding the mistake that it had anything to do with the Blessed Sacrament, by insisting on all the circumstances of the facts which so directly exclude the supposition. Where are we told that our Lord administered the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood by using a soppet or morsel dipped in any other dish? Where are we told that it was in the midst of the conversation about the betrayal, with no form or

ceremony to indicate the sacred character of the rite? Finally, where are we told that our Blessed Lord, in speaking of the Blessed Sacrament, would have spoken of It as 'a morsel of bread dipped'? The circumstances which St. John has added as to this incident are certainly such as to make it very difficult to see in it an administration of Holy Communion.

Again, as it is clear that what was given to Judas was not given at the same time to the rest, it must, if it was the Blessed Sacrament, have been given to him before the general Communion of all, or after. If it was after, then Judas must have been communicated twice by our Lord. If before, we have to suppose that, without saying what He was doing, our Blessed Lord gave the Blessed Sacrament to the traitor, unwarned, unprepared, and apparently as a mark of mere friendship. It is clear that our Lord washed the feet of the disciples with some kind of solemnity and grave ceremonial, such as befitted the holy significance of the rite. The giving of Holy Communion to an Apostle, or to the whole band of the Apostles, would surely, it must be thought, have been done in at least as solemn a manner as the Lavanda—and it was the first time that any one had received It. Is it conceivable, that in giving the traitor, even as a last means of recalling him to his duty, the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood, our Lord would do it without any ceremony or ritual which might move his heart and excite his reverence?

CHAPTER VI.

After the Departure of Judas.

St. John xiii. 31—38 ; St. Luke xxii. 24—38 ;
Story of the Gospels, §§ 153, 154.

THE method which we are obliged to follow in the present chapter will hardly need any explanation to those readers who have followed what has been said with regard to the very unequal manner in which our information regarding the events of the evening of Holy Thursday has come to us from the four sacred historians, severally. The great mass of what has come down to us concerning this evening is contributed by one alone of the Evangelists, and, moreover, by the one of them who wrote the last of the four. St. John's matter flows on generally without break, but the study of the three earlier writers makes us see that what they have recorded he has passed over in silence, with an allusion or two, or a hint, here and there, that he is aware of what has been said by them. On the other hand, the very slender contributions of the other three are in generally disconnected fragments, and hence we are obliged to do our best at conjecturing at what exact spot in his narrative they are to find insertion. We can use here and there some notes internal to the fragments, thus contributed, which may help us in our conjectures, but it must still be acknowledged that they are at best careful guesses as to the exact

arrangement which is chosen, while, in any case, in the formation of a Harmony, the choice has to be made. The intrinsic importance of perfect security on such matters may certainly be greatly exaggerated. On account of the rule followed by St. John of not mentioning directly what had before been mentioned by the others, the great central mystery of the evening, the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, has thus to be fixed by conjecture. We can only reasonably conclude from St. John's account that it must at all events be fixed after, and not before, the departure of Judas. There is also the greatest appearance of probability for the opinion that the incidents to be mentioned in the present chapter occurred between the departure of the traitor and the institution of which we speak, and that the earlier part of the conversation between our Lord and the Apostles, filling up the time when they asked Him several questions as to the meaning of what had been said, is also to be placed before the institution of the Blessed Eucharist.

There, however, can hardly be any doubt as to the first incident mentioned by St. John, which is subjoined to his account of the departure of Judas. 'He, therefore, having received the morsel, went out immediately. And it was night.' Judas would, in his then state of mind, welcome with joy the words which seemed to set him free. Nothing could have been more irksome to him now than to find himself in our Blessed Lord's presence, which he had come almost to loathe, and besides this feeling there was the imminent fear that our Lord might go one step further in His exposure of the treason, and name him openly to the disciples. Judas, then, was glad enough to go, and the master who now

ruled him, Satan, must have been eager to hurry on the final accomplishment of the plot, continuing to set before him motives of the fear of detection, of the danger which was incurred by delay, of the possible anger of the Chief Priests at their disappointment, and the like. Satan is always anxious to hurry on his victims to their ruin, and then he turns round on them with temptations to despair. The Evangelist says it was night when Judas went out, and this has been thought by some to note the state of darkness into which the unhappy apostate plunged himself when he abandoned our Lord.

St. John then subjoins to this, and in contrast to it, what passed meantime in the Cenacle. 'When he therefore was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. And if God be glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and immediately He will glorify Him!' For the departure of Judas to execute his treachery was the beginning of the Passion. It put the fire, as we say, to the train of powder. From this time it was no longer in the power of Judas to control or guide the measures of the enemies of our Blessed Lord. He became their tool, which they were soon ready enough to cast aside and treat with indifference. The Passion was to be the glory of the Son of Man, because in it and by it He was shown, as the Roman centurion declared after He had expired, to be the Son of God, both by His patience under His sufferings, and the power which He displayed even as He hung upon the Cross and the portents which accompanied His Death. God was glorified in Him, because all that He did and suffered and accomplished, and above all, the redemption of the world, which was

wrought by the Passion, was the greatest glory possible to God, the most perfect satisfaction to His justice, and the source to Him of all the glory that He will have throughout eternity from His redeemed by the Cross. God was to glorify Him in Himself, in return, as it were, for the glory given to Him by the humiliation of His Son in Human Nature. He was to glorify Him by the Resurrection and all its wonderful consequences, which began first of all in Himself, in the glory of His Body and Soul, and He rose from the dead, not as Lazarus did, by the power of another and to the same mortal life as before, but by His own Divine Power, and to the glorious life in Soul and Body which had been His by right from the beginning of His Incarnation, and which, moreover, He imparts as to the Resurrection, to all mankind, and as to its glory and beatified state, to all who are to inherit the Kingdom He has won. And this was to take place, as our Lord says, immediately. It was nothing in the far future. Our Lord spoke these words on the Thursday evening, and by the Sunday morning the whole of the glorification was His, the Passion itself ending in less than twenty-four hours.

The next words of our Lord are full of affection, like the words of One Who has to depart quickly for a time from those whom He loves most tenderly. 'Little children'—an expression of endearment which He very likely used frequently in His moments of expansive love to the Apostles, and which would be more often recorded if we had more accounts of His manner with them in such times of intimacy—'Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You shall seek Me, and as I said to the Jews, Whither I go, you cannot come, so I say to you

now.' For He was going to the short but most bitter suffering of His Passion, by which He was to work eternal redemption for all that were to be His, and then He was to return to them for a short space of time, to leave them again till they were to be reunited in Heaven. They were to be left by Him now for a few hours. Then again, after the forty days between Easter and the Ascension, He was to leave them for ever, as to His visible Human Presence, and they were to rejoin Him in Heaven after many years of labour and suffering, and be with Him for ever. He does not describe all this, for it was enough to break the tidings of His departure simply, and to tell them that it meant separation as to visible intercourse. When He had spoken to the Jews about their seeking Him, He had added that they should not find Him, but He leaves this clause out in these words to the Apostles, for He did not wish to pain them, and besides, He meant to provide many ways by which they were to be able to find Him, though not in His visible Presence.

He proceeds to give them in a few words two commandments, or rather a commandment with an instruction added thereto. 'A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.' The best way of understanding what our Lord here says about the novelty of the commandment which He gives, is found in the consideration of the new state into which those to whom it is given are placed by virtue of what He has done for them. The commandment of the love of our neighbour cannot be called new in itself, for

it is probably that 'commandment concerning his neighbour' which was given to every man in the beginning of the world, as we are told in the Sapiential book.¹ Our Lord does not say, simply a new commandment, but a new commandment I give unto you that you love one another. The commandment of the love of our neighbour is not limited in its range of application, but binds us to love all men, however little the obligation may be thought of by many men even among Christians. But this commandment of our Lord is given to us as Christians who by it are bound to love one another, that is, they are bound to love one another by a new tie which wonderfully enhances and enforces the old, not by absolving them from its obligation, but by calling into life a number of new reasons to give it power.

Our Lord seems to tell the Apostles that Christians are bound to love one another, not simply as children of the same universal Father, but also because they are the members of the one Body, through Christ, for Whose sake they love one another, Who also gives the commandment, and from Whom they would separate themselves if they did not love one another, and on account of His love for each, as He says, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. This commandment in all its freshness of force could not come into existence till Christ had shown us His love, till He had given the full measure of that ineffable tenderness. But when He had once done this we find the love which He here enjoins on us at once springing into light in the mutual charity of the first Christians at Jerusalem, where they had 'one heart and one soul.' And this, however varying have been the degrees in which it has been manifested,

¹ Eccclus. xvii. 12.

in different places and at different times, has ever been the mark of the true Church and the children of the Catholic Unity. For the love which is in the heart must be manifested outwardly in order to be seen, and the great and most essential way of this manifestation is love of and faithfulness to the Church's Unity, without which it is vain to manifest mutual love in other ways, according to the saying of St. Augustine, that no one can have the love of God in him who does not love that Unity. 'By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.' The mutual charity of the early Christians was incomprehensible, a matter of perpetual astonishment to the pagan world into which the Church was cast, as a fragile vessel into a most tempestuous sea. It became the badge and mark of the Christian community to those who could not understand its creed nor live up to its law. It bound them together in unity of faith and love, which was a greater evidence of the truth of the Divine claims of the Church to obedience, than the sufferings of the martyrs, the teaching of the confessors, and the purity of the virgins.

In the early ages, Tertullian says that Christians seemed to be children of the same father and mother, and neither language, nor race, nor country, however different, availed to separate them. If all men do not even as yet acknowledge the claims of the Church and her children to be the true disciples of Jesus Christ, the fact is sufficiently accounted for by the decay of mutual charity. If Christians really loved one another in the full meaning of this commandment of our Lord, they could not bear to have different creeds, and so heresies would be at an end, nor to belong to separated communities outside the

Catholic Unity, and so schisms could not exist, nor could they bear to sin by the violation of any of the commandments of the second table, for charity fulfils them all. For the mutual love among Christians has its source and its power in the love of each and all for our Lord, Who is directly and personally offended and affronted and rebelled against by faults against faith and unity. For He has Himself taught us the faith and imposed the law of unity, and secured both for ever by leaving in His own place in the world the authority which is the safeguard of both, to which He has further promised an infallible guidance and an indefectible and indissoluble power.

Our Lord perhaps insisted on this commandment at this time, because He had before been somewhat prevented from giving it, on account of the presence of Judas with the others, and because the moment having come for the beginning, as has been said, of the Passion, in which it was that His great display of love for them was to be made, it was natural that now at last He should speak of it. Moreover, there may have been some possible danger among the Apostles of an infringement of perfect charity in regard to Judas, whose treachery would now soon be known, or who, at least, might become an object of suspicion after his departure. Our Lord may have desired to turn their thoughts quite away from what Judas might be occupied about, and so He spoke at once of the great glory to Himself and His Father which was to be the fruit of the treason, and He enforced the new law by setting Himself before them as their example in its observance, and by the implied promise which was attached to their faithfulness in obedience thereto. St. Peter seems

to have spoken next, and his words referred to what our Lord had said about His own departure before giving the 'new commandment.' 'Simon Peter said to Him, Lord, whither goest Thou? Jesus answered, Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow hereafter.' He puts aside the question, not wishing to answer it directly, lest He should have to speak too plainly about the circumstances of what was to happen during the next few hours, and their connection with the exit of Judas. He was going, indeed, immediately to His Cross and to death, and how could Peter and the others, who were not strong enough to help forsaking Him and denying Him, follow Him to these?

Our Lord therefore told His loving Apostle that where He was going, he could not follow Him, for the question of St. Peter implied a desire and readiness to go with Him wherever it might be. 'Thou canst not follow Me now,' as if it were added, 'Why ask whither I go, when you have not the strength to come with Me or to follow Me?' But He could not withhold the gracious promise, 'But thou shalt follow hereafter.' The time will come, that is, when thou wilt have strength, and thy greatest strength and courage will be in the truth and the consciousness that thou art then following Me. Many years of labour and trial were in store for St. Peter, who was to be the first wearer of that crown of perennial thorns which is the peculiar lot of the rulers of the Church, those who have the precious charge of 'feeding the sheep and feeding the lambs' of their Master, a charge of ineffable responsibility fraught with the most exquisite affliction. St. Paul has described the trials and continual crucifixions of

the Apostolical ministry, but the only Apostle who could fully feel the burthens of the Pastor of Pastors has been silent about these. St. Peter was to bear these for a length of time which does not fall short of the years which most men can give to any full active work, and then he was indeed to follow his Master, finding a way even in the crucifixion in which it was his joy to imitate Him, to humble himself in the manner in which he suffered it. If he had been allowed to follow Him now, there would perhaps have been a worse failure than that which happened when he tried at our Lord's word to walk to Him on the waters, and the same hand which saved him from sinking then, most mercifully and compassionately saved him from the danger.

St. Peter, who thought only of his love for his Master, could not understand this, for love persuades men that they can undertake anything and bear anything, and is a false measurer of spiritual strength and endurance. 'Why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake.' Perhaps it might have been our Lord's will to strengthen him by a wonderful infusion of courage, and he might have borne to die by our Lord's side, as St. Stephen a few months or years later was able to die for Him. But our Lord had already said to them all, 'Whither I go, you cannot come,' and St. Peter's words were to some extent a denial of what our Lord had said, by which the Apostle thought Him to mean that there was too great a danger for them to bear if they now followed Him. St. Peter's words showed some presumption, but it was rather ignorance which miscalculated his own powers, than an exaggeration of his love to his Master, which was very great indeed. So our Lord

gave him now, the first time, the strong reproof which He afterwards repeated. 'Amen, amen, I say to thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou deny Me thrice.'

It is likely that neither St. Peter nor any other of the Apostles had in their minds any true conception of the swiftness and violence with which the storm of the Passion would immediately burst upon them. They perhaps did not understand the full virulence of the hatred of the Chief Priests, Caiphas and his associates, or the extreme energy with which they would press on the destruction, as they thought, of our Lord, when once they had Him in their power. And certainly they could not estimate the wild fury with which Satan would urge on his tools in his hatred to God and our Lord, and how soon they themselves would be in the midst of the storm which was to rage about Him, and in which, it seems, the human malice which Satan had been able to set in flame burst into a conflagration which even he was unable to check when, as some think, he wished. Our Lord's calm and peace remained always the same, till the moment came for Him to allow Himself to be troubled, as He had allowed Himself, at the washing of the feet. This moment was to come a little later, in His great Agony in the Garden. His ordinary demeanour showed no loss of tranquillity, and it would have been easy to think that when He could be so serene and even so joyous, the time of danger could not be near. He has infinite tenderness for the weakness of His children, and in His ordinary Providence hides from them the coming storm, bidding them, however, always fortify themselves against it by prayer and reliance on Him. He could have told them much more than that

Peter should deny Him thrice. But His present object was rather to encourage and console them, for now He was to take His leave of them before His Passion, and the words that He spoke and the gifts that He gave were to be their support through years of labours and trials, and were to live on for ever as His parting words and parting gifts in the Church.

Other incidents of this last evening in the Cenacle are related by St. Luke, who in this part of his narrative has placed together what he had collected of the minor circumstances of the occasion. We place them here, then, for sake of convenience, though it might be more natural, perhaps, to go on with the account in St. John, who begins his next paragraph with words which may very well have followed on those which we have just treated. What St. Luke here mentions would then have to be reserved for a later place in the narrative. Yet, if we are to break in on what seems St. John's continuous narrative, it is better to do so here than at a later point. St. Luke, then, tells us that among the incidents of the evening was the dispute among the disciples—a dispute which was a renewal of a former discussion, of which we had to speak at the time. 'And there was also a strife among them, which of them should seem to be the greater. And He said to them, The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and they that have power over them are called benefactors. But you, not so, but he that is the greater among you let him become as the younger, and he that is the leader, as he that serveth. For which is greater, he that sitteth at table or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth.'

The words themselves need little explanation, and they have been already considered in the place where they occur in the two earliest Evangelists.² The fact that St. Luke inserts them here is a proof that it was not on a single occasion only that the discussion took place, and the third Evangelist, thinking it well to give it some mention in his own Gospel, naturally selected an occasion different from that to which St. Matthew and St. Mark referred. We have not much reason to seek far for the origin of a difference in opinion as to the priority or primacy among the Apostles. It is clear beyond denial that our Lord had more than once pointed out St. Peter as the first among them, and in this very context of St. Luke's Gospel, as we shall presently see, we have a strong evidence of this precedence of St. Peter. But our Lord seldom anticipated in declaring the arrangements which He contemplated. So it also became, after the Ascension, the rule of the Church to unfold gradually to the world, as necessity called them forth, the institutions and ordinances which she had received from her Divine Founder. Thus, although Peter was distinguished by the great promise made to him, there was no fixed hierarchy, if we may use the term, with its gradations and introductions, formally before the eyes of the great body of the disciples. Other disciples might seem, at times, to have higher claims than his, or claims as high as his, and it was probably only on some particular occasions that such discussions arose. Nor do we know that this was carried on with any kind of vehemence.

It is still more uncertain, that when the Evangelists tell us that there was a strife among them, who

² *The Training of the Apostles*, pt. iii. p. 220, *Public Life*, vol. xi.

should seem to be the greater, they mean us to understand that each, or some of them, advanced his or their own claims. It seems more likely that the disciples were divided in their opinions as to the person or persons marked out for some pre-eminence, some, perhaps, thinking that it should be given to the earliest called to our Lord's company, some that it should belong to one near of kin to Him, nearly half of the Apostolic body being related to Him, and others to the possessor of some other qualifications. The mere fact of the difference is not so important, as it is natural that it should have existed. The reason why the Evangelists mention the divergence is that it became the occasion of our Lord's loving and weighty animadversion, and that the words by which He put an end to it are valuable to the Church through the whole of her history.

Our Lord continues, as St. Luke tells us, in a very loving way. 'And you are they who have continued with Me in My temptations, and I dispose unto you, as My Father hath disposed to Me, a Kingdom,' that is, as it seems, a royal and princely state and dignity, 'that you may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom, and may sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'³ The omission of the number of the thrones in this place, as in contrast with the former passage in which the words occur, is significant, and it may be taken, as has been said, as helping to guide us to the opinion that this incident took place after the exit of Judas. The promise amounts to this, that the Apostles are appointed by our Lord as princes in His Kingdom, and that they are all to have a pre-

³ Compare St. Matt. xix. 28. There the words are, 'Sit on *twelve* thrones.'

eminence in glory which, if it has to be measured by an earthly measure, corresponds to the honours, dignity, and noble estate and fortune of those who, in an earthly kingdom, are made partakers of the king's table and authority. But in this there is no distinction made between one Apostle and another, there is no one marked out as being the first. And if these words followed immediately upon those which precede them, it appears that our Lord may have meant to put down all thoughts of rivalry among the Apostles by setting before them a prospect of blessedness and dignity in which there was no element of preference of one to another. For so it will be in Heaven, not that one saint may not have greater blessedness, greater nearness to our Lord, according to his merits, than another, but that all will be as happy and blessed as it is possible for them to be, and the satisfaction of each in the superabundant reward which he possesses will be infinitely perfect, so as to exclude all thought of more, while at the same time each one will enjoy and exult in the graces and rewards of each other as much as if they were his own. We may suppose that the blessed Apostles, after they were confirmed in grace, had some foretaste of this heavenly joy in one another, which is the characteristic of the Kingdom of God, and those who are most like to them while on earth in their consummate sanctity, may be able to understand how their burning love for the advancement of the service of their Master was never tempered by any seeking to be the most distinguished in His service for their own sake.

If the paragraph which St. Luke subjoins is to be considered as a continuation of the same narrative, it serves beautifully to complete the doctrine of

what has preceded. 'And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren.' There is here a marked distinction between St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles, which is rendered all the more conspicuous by the following words, in which St. Luke relates what seems to have been the second occasion on which our Lord foretold to St. Peter that he should deny Him thrice before the cock crew. Our Lord was of course perfectly aware of all the wiles and desires of the great enemy of souls, although He does not often speak of them in particular. Here He lifts the veil for a moment, for the sake of telling St. Peter of the extremely severe trial to which the whole band of the Apostles were to be exposed during the hours of the coming Passion. They were living on in innocence and security, though they were so soon to fail in prayer. They little thought of what was to come to their Lord, and still less of their own danger. Even when the saints are the most vigilant, they hardly understand the extreme malice and activity of their spiritual enemies, who never relent or relax in their machinations against them, as far as God permits. And as we see in the history of Job and in other cases, God does permit them to be at times assailed with great fury, keeping all the time His protecting hand over them, and allowing Satan only just as much power against them as He sees fit to let him use.

Our Lord now informs St. Peter that a time of such permission of trial was at hand, that Satan had asked God, as he did in the case of Job, and as

he does continually in the conflicts of the saints, for permission to assail the Apostles and sift them as wheat, that their faithfulness and courage might be put to the proof. Our Lord implies also that this request had been granted, but that He had Himself interfered, praying, in His Sacred Humanity, that the band of His Apostles might be protected against the danger of falling away, and that the means He had asked for in order for the security of all was the confirmation of the faith of St. Peter against failure. He further implies that He made this known to St. Peter in order that he might be the means of confirming his brethren, who, by his aid, were thus to be kept from falling away. There is some question about the exact meaning of these words which the Vulgate translates *conversus*, and which in our English version is rendered, 'Thou being once converted.' But whatever may be the exact meaning of the words, it is quite clear that the whole sentence conveys a charge to St. Peter to exert himself in the confirmation of his brethren, whether or not it is meant that his own 'conversion' must be the necessary preliminary to such exertion or not.

If the words before us had been used by our Lord at another time, and to any one but St. Peter, they would seem to us to convey to the person to whom they were addressed an intimation that the whole body of the Apostles were to be very severely tried by temptations arranged by the devil, that the trial was to be of the most sifting character, that the result would be a manifestation of greater or less weakness on their part, and that the person to whom our Lord spoke was so far distinguished from them that our Lord had prayed, in that specially efficacious way in which His prayer was usually made, that the

faith of that person at least should not fail, and that He enjoined on him, moreover, that when the trial was past he was to set himself as a charge received from our Lord to the work of strengthening his brethren. This is what is naturally conveyed by the words used by our Lord, first the loving warning of danger to all, then the assurance of special prayer for Peter, and then the commission to strengthen the rest. It must strike every reader, as it probably struck the Apostles at the time and afterwards, that the person to whom they were to look for help and strengthening was not St. Peter, but our Lord Himself. But He now speaks evidently of a time when He Himself would not be at hand for the work of strengthening them all, and that His own part in the matter is expressed by the special prayer which He had made, 'I have prayed for *thee* that *thy* faith may not fail.' In the prayer made for Peter is contained his commission to confirm others, and the success of that commission. There can be no doubt that if these words had been addressed to St. John, or to any one else among the Apostles, he would have considered himself as having been the subject of a special prayer of our Lord, distinct from the others, and that they would have looked to him as their appointed channel of strength and confirmation under or after the coming trial. Indeed, the Apostles heard these words spoken to St. Peter in their own presence, and the charge that they should have recourse to him was conveyed in the same words as the charge to him to confirm his brethren. And the whole conduct of St. Peter after our Lord's withdrawal from earth by the Ascension, seems a very natural and a continual comment on these words.

It can hardly be questioned with fairness that these words put St. Peter in our Lord's place, as far as this particular work of 'confirming' is concerned, and that they come in very fitly into the Evangelical account of our Lord's last words and provisions on the night in which He was betrayed. It is natural also to remark that the person addressed was not St. John, or any other of the Apostles who may have failed so far as to forsake our Lord, and in that way disavow Him, but not so far as to proceed to the length of denying Him more than once. The charge to confirm the brethren under him after their great 'sifting' by Satan, is not therefore given to St. Peter because he failed less than the rest, at least, less outwardly, but for some other reason. It was because our Lord had prayed for him with particular efficacy, and had done so not on account of his individual and personal merit. It is not unreasonable to think that the motive for this selection of St. Peter was that he already stood in some kind of pre-eminence among his brethren, so as to be the person to be looked to naturally to take our Lord's place in His absence. Thus this text is one of the chain of great sayings of our Lord with regard to this most blessed Apostle. It stands chronologically between the words of our Lord which promised him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and that what he bound on earth should be bound in Heaven, and what he loosed on earth should be loosed in Heaven, and that other final and most loving commission, 'Lovest thou Me more than these? Feed My lambs, Feed My lambs, Feed My sheep.' These things were not said without a purpose, they are among the words which do not pass away. They have not only been said by our Lord, but recorded by the

Evangelist under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, in books of Sacred Scripture of which He is the Author. And if more were required, the interpretation which applies them to St. Peter, not as a private person, but as the representative of our Lord, has lived in the Church after him, and will live until the end of the world. The words, 'Confirm thy brethren;' are spoken to him to whom the keys of Heaven are given, and to whom the commission of feeding both the lambs and the sheep of the flock are entrusted. For in what is he to strengthen his brethren but in the faith in which, by our Lord's special prayer, he among all is never to fail, and what is it that qualifies him to feed the little ones and even the great ones of the Church with the truth of God, but the unerring faith which is here promised to him?

The sequel to these words in St. Luke is very remarkable on many accounts, as we shall see. 'Peter saith to Him, Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison and to death. And He said, I say to thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day until thou thrice deniest that thou knowest Me.' St. Peter seems to have been unable to put out of his mind the fact that our Lord was going away, and that his own desire was that, wherever He went, he might be His companion. There was much pertinacity in this, for our Lord had already put off the question, 'Lord, whither goest Thou?' in a manner which showed that He thought it better not to answer it directly, and He had distinctly told them, 'Whither I go you cannot come.' St. Peter must have thought over this answer, but his thoughts dwelt on the place to which our Lord was going, not on his own inability to follow Him. Yet, though he had received the promise that he should follow Him

hereafter, he measured his own strength by his love for his Lord. He had, however, come to the conclusion that it was of some great danger that our Lord had spoken. But on that former occasion, only, as it seems, shortly before this moment, our Lord had rebuked his protestation that he would lay down his life for Him, by the peremptory answer, 'Amen, amen, I say to thee, the cock shall not crow till thou deny Me thrice.' And then our Blessed Lord had gone on to lay down much beautiful doctrine in a few words, on which we have commented, about the difference between the rulers and great officials, so to say, in the Church, and the kings of the nations who lord it over their subjects, and require to be called benefactors. There was food for long thought and meditation in what He had said, and still more in the blessed promise which He had made to all the Apostles, of sitting on thrones, judging the tribes of Israel. Still more might Peter have been moved to enter into himself by the last words which followed as to the sifting of the Apostles as wheat, or by the prayer of our Lord for him in particular, and on the commission which he was to receive with respect to the others. But instead of speaking of all these great things, St. Peter was so pre-occupied with his desire to share our Lord's danger, that he had no thought for anything else.

'Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison and to death.' The words seemed like a direct contradiction of what our Lord had before told him about his denials, before the cockcrow. He simply and boldly reasserted what He had said before in different words, adding imprisonment and death as circumstances in which he was ready to follow Him. The words, 'I am ready,' seem almost

plainly to deny what our Lord had said, 'Thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow hereafter.' The whole speech, therefore, shows some disregard of the line of thought to which our Lord had been directing their minds, the consequence of St. Peter's own intense affection for his Master, while among those things which He had just said was the mention of a very great trial coming on the whole band of the Apostles, in consequence of which a very peculiar and important charge had been committed to himself.

Our Lord knew perfectly well the sincerity and earnestness of His Apostle's love for Himself, how much he deserved in return, but He could not at the same time be blind to his weakness, and to his obstinate self-confidence. And so He repeated in almost stronger words the prediction He had before made, giving him at the same time to understand that notwithstanding the shameful denial which He foretold, he should not forfeit His grace. 'I say to thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, till thou thrice deniest that thou knowest Me.' For our Lord seems to have felt bound to reprove St. Peter, who had shown himself so self-confident, and we know that His words had their effect, not, indeed, in saving him from his fall, but in bringing him to penance after he had fallen. The time was to come, as He had predicted, when Peter was for the third time over to deny that he knew our Lord, and then He gave him that gracious loving look of which the Evangelist speaks, 'And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny Me thrice.' And so his fall became the source to him of a perpetual contrition, by virtue of which, among other effects, he was filled

with that lowly esteem of himself and of that compassion for others, which are shown in all that we know of his deeds and words after the Passion, and which were of such immense value as fitting him for his office of the Shepherd of souls after our Lord.

These two passages, which are thus joined together by St. Luke, may seem contradictory the one to the other, at least to those who do not see in the first a recognition of the very high position entrusted to St. Peter with regard to the other Apostles. But, in truth, it might rather be said that the second is not so much contradictory to the first, so understood, as an explanation and a confirmation of it. It is an explanation of it, inasmuch as it leads us to understand how the personal weaknesses or defects in those who held even the high commission of confirming the brethren in the faith, are no argument against the truth of that high commission. It was given to Peter officially as the Vicegerent of our Lord, after His departure, and it is no more a contradiction to say that it can be exercised by a man full of personal misery, than it would be to say that an imperfect or vicious priest can exercise the power of sacramental absolution or of consecrating the Blessed Sacrament. It is a confirmation of the truth concerning the great commission of Peter, which remains in his successors in the Church, because without it, or rather, what is much the same thing, without the fact of St. Peter's denial which it predicts, we should be without the explanation which it furnishes as to the true distinction between the failings of a private person and the powers with which Christ has invested the office which he holds for the benefit of the Church. The two sentences, 'Confirm thou thy brethren,' and, 'I

say to thee, the cock shall not crow this day,' and the rest, were not spoken at different times, but one immediately after the other. They belong to the same conversation. They are not recorded in different parts of St. Luke's Gospel, but side by side, not one by one Evangelist, the other by another. At all events, it is clear that St. Luke saw in them nothing contradictory to one another. He understood, we think, the former declaration as a promise to St. Peter, setting him in the place of our Lord Himself in His absence for a particular and most important work in the Church, the need of which she experiences in every year of her existence. He understood the latter as a warning that such self-confidence, in whomsoever, however high in the Church, it may exist, will lead to a personal and individual fall, though neither that nor any other personal failing will be allowed to interfere with the exercise of a power which rests, not on the constancy of human faithfulness, but on the immovable authority of a Divine decree for the good of the Church and the world.

'And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, or scrip, and shoes, did you want anything? But they said, Nothing. Then said He unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip, and he that hath not, let him sell his coat and buy a sword. For I say unto you, this that is written must yet be fulfilled in Me, And with the wicked He was reckoned. For the things concerning Me have an end. But they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And He said to them, It is enough.'

This passage may remind us of our Lord's words on a former occasion, when He told the disciples

that the days were to come when they should desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and should not see it.⁴ It appears that He wished now to prepare them for the great difference which they would find between the external circumstances of their lot, as they had been when He had first sent them out, and as they were to be when they should have to bear the brunt of the battle for themselves. And He seems also to have in His mind the immediate future, the great storm which was to burst upon them in the next few hours, when they would think themselves almost abandoned by that tender Providence which had watched over them and supplied their every need in the days of His Ministry. His words mean, as to this, that they would have need of every resource they possessed, they would be left in a state of destitution and peril, and He connects this with the prophecy of Isaias concerning His Passion. He seems, in the first instance, directly to withdraw the precept He had given when they went out to preach two and two, and when, in order to train them in the practice of poverty and of perfect reliance on Providence, Whose work they were doing in the world, He had told them to 'take nothing for the journey, no money in their purses, no scrip, no bread, nor shoes, nor two coats,⁵ for the workman is worthy of his hire,' which last words show the reason of the commandment at the time when it was given.

Things are altered now, He seems to say, and He takes particular care, as it seems, to let us know that the instructions given when the Apostles first were sent out, especially as regards the absence of

⁴ St. Luke xiii. 22; *Story of the Gospels*, § 122.

⁵ St. Matt. x. 9; St. Mark vi. 8; St. Luke ix. 3, 4.

provision for their sustenance, were not meant to be of universal application. That first experiment in their career as preachers was carefully guarded against dangers and hardships by the loving Providence of God. It was, as it were, the first flight of young birds from their parents' nest, and everything was arranged for them most tenderly, so as to give them courage and to ensure success. It was not always to be so, especially in the days which were now approaching. The shepherd was to be smitten, and the sheep of the flock were to be scattered abroad. At the time of the Passion, all men were to be against Him, and they were so far to share His Passion, so that no one would be inclined to help them, and they were not to take up their work of preaching and teaching until after the day of Pentecost. They had shared in the credit and honour which had hung round Him while He was teaching and working miracles, speaking as no other man ever yet spake, and showing that God was with Him by most marvellous deeds of compassion and love. Now they were to be involved in His disgrace and loss of repute. 'You must help yourselves,' He seems to say, 'as best you can, provide for yourselves in whatever way may be open to you. It is not only poverty and destitution that are to fall on you, but the contempt and neglect of the world.' He now gives them instructions for times of persecution, when their work will not have to be carried on amid populations eager to welcome them, ready to hang upon their lips and receive them as the messengers of God, and when, indeed, the preaching of the Word of God will be in itself dangerous and only to be carried on with due precautions and protections to guard those to whom it is committed.

So the words seem to reach in their meaning many phases of Apostolical life besides the actual time of the Passion, though they may have been primarily intended for that time.⁶

It is remarkable that in these words our Lord refers pointedly to the great prophecy of Isaias, as has been said. It is natural to consider that He had in His mind the whole of that passage, and that He meant them to dwell upon the whole, and not merely on the words which He quoted. Those words occur towards the end of the passage, and the sense of the context seems to suggest the view of the Passion, regarded by God as the expiation of the sins of the world, not only as an utter loss of reputation among men, 'because His Soul was delivered to death, and He was numbered amongst the transgressors, and He bore the sins of many, and was delivered because of their iniquities.'⁷ St. Mark, who wrote under the guidance of St. Peter, notes the fulfilment of the prophecy when he comes to mention our Lord's Crucifixion between the two thieves.⁸ The whole passage in the Prophet sets our Lord before us, not only as the Victim for the sins of the world, but as utterly humiliated and crushed on account of those sins, and the words here quoted seem to imply that during the time of the Sacrifice, not only was He left without a word to say for His own defence, but that He would not exert, as usual, His power for those who belonged to Him most nearly, as St. Ignatius bids us note in our meditations on this mystery, how His Divinity seems to withdraw Itself from activity in order that His Sacred Humanity may suffer more. And we

⁶ See Didacus Stella, *Enarr. in Luc.* c. xxii.

⁷ Isaias liii. 12, lxx.

⁸ St. Mark xv. 27.

know that a large part of His sufferings consisted in His dwelling in thought on, and witnessing, the sufferings of His Blessed Mother, the Apostles, Magdalene, and the other saints, and even what He foreknew would be suffered by the saints in after-times.

Our Lord seems to warn them that the whole of the prophecy was to be fulfilled, 'All things shall be accomplished which were written by the Prophet concerning the Son of Man'⁹ No drop of the chalice of suffering was to be left undrunk. The Apostles must prepare for the worst. 'The things concerning Me have an end.' But he speaks with much reserve and reticence, not wishing to harrow their hearts with all the details of the Passion, especially as He had so many other things to speak about on this holy night, great mysteries of love as to which they were as yet very imperfectly informed, embodying the fruits of the Passion, in gifts of unimaginable and undescribable richness. This tender reserve on our Lord's part is one of the chief characteristics of His mode of dealing with the Apostles on this evening. He has to warn them, to prepare them for danger, to instruct them as to coming evils of which they had hardly the faintest anticipation, and yet all the time to keep them, as far as could be, in a state of peace and calm somewhat like His own, in order that they might understand what He was to speak of as far as was possible, and go forth from the Cenacle with fortitude and confidence in God. We seem to see that they could understand the words He now spoke only in a very imperfect way. They seem to have had some intelligence or suspicion of coming danger to Him, and

⁹ St. Luke xviii. 32.

their chief thought was not so much how they were to provide for themselves, but what they could do for Him. They remembered that there were among them and their friends in the Cenacle, two 'swords'—at least they are spoken of as such, though some of the Christian writers think that they were only the large knives which were used in the slaughtering of the Paschal Lamb. So far they could say that they were armed, and it seems that one of these weapons was actually taken to the Garden of Gethsemani by St. Peter, who afterwards drew it, when the armed band came to seize his Master, and cut off with it the ear of the servant of the Chief Priest.

But they said, 'Lord, behold, here are two swords, and He said, It is enough.' Some writers have found a spiritual meaning in these words of our Lord, as also in the mention of the two swords, which have been taken to represent the ecclesiastical and secular powers, both of which have to be wielded for the maintenance of the Kingdom of God on earth in full perfection, and the words, 'It is enough,' are thought by those who follow this interpretation to signify our Lord's approval of their use. It is not likely, at all events, that our Lord wished to set this doctrine before His Apostles at this time. The state of things which required the application of this theory was certainly not come, and the secular power of the civil government was to league itself with the ecclesiastical, though not to support His Kingdom, but to take away His life. It is more natural to take the words in a more simple way. Our Lord knew that the Apostles did not understand at the time the truths which He had been putting before them, and it was not worth His while

to correct the mistake into which they had fallen by taking His words as to the sword in their literal signification. When the time came for the use of the sword in the Garden, He checked it at once, and the words which He then used, as well as His action in healing the wounded ear of Malchus, laid down the doctrine which was to prevail in the Church more forcibly, than if He had now entered into a long explanation of that doctrine. St. Peter had the opportunity of displaying his mistaken zeal for his Master, and, for the present, the Apostles were left without further instruction. Our Lord's reply, 'It is enough,' was the kind answer of one who wishes to put aside a subject on which He does not desire to enter.

CHAPTER VII.

Questions of the Apostles.

St. John xiv. 1—12 ; *Story of the Gospels*, § 156.

THE last words of our Lord must naturally have filled the Apostles with a certain amount of trouble and fear. Up to this stage in the incidents of the evening, there had been more than one alternation for them between hope and fear, consolation and alarm. He could not help warning them of the coming trial, and yet His great love for them would have prevented Him from refraining from topics of comfort and the suggestion of motive after motive of courage, even if His Divine knowledge of the state of their hearts had not shown Him that those were, above all others, the topics of which they had the greatest need at this moment, when they were about to be exposed to an ordeal such as they had never passed through before. Now He had inflicted a fresh blow by speaking of the necessity of the fulfilment of the sorrowful prophecies concerning His Passion. He had virtually warned them that all that Isaias had said of Him must be literally accomplished. He had quoted but a few words of all that long description in the prophetic vision, and as we have often had to remark, when He quoted Sacred Scripture, He usually meant to turn the thoughts of those to whom He spoke to the whole passage and context, rather than merely to the few words cited by Him.

We may remember how the passage quoted here was used by St. Philip the deacon for the instruction of the Ethiopian eunuch, of whom we have the story in the Acts of the Apostles, in the whole doctrine concerning our Lord. It may well have been one of the passages on which our Lord spoke Himself to the two disciples whom He joined on their road to Emmaus, when He told them, 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?'¹ And as we know, this passage was in the mind of St. Mark when he wrote the account of the Crucifixion of our Lord between the thieves, a touch which we probably owe to the thought of St. Peter. It would certainly have been very easy for our Lord to have explained at this time the prophecies of Holy Scripture concerning His Passion, and perhaps it might have been a source of strength and courage to the Apostles, to furnish them with that knowledge. But it seems not to have been the time for enlarging on the prophecies, but rather for consoling the mournful hearts that could not bear to hear of His leaving them. That was grief enough, without further instruction as to the details of the Passion, and so we find that our Lord in His tender consideration leaves all that part of the future alone, while He devotes Himself to making their faith in Himself more robust and deeply grounded, and adds moreover the wonderful topics of which He is about to suggest to make their hope in Him as strong as their faith. Such, however, is the character of the passage to which He had but briefly alluded, without dwelling upon its particular predictions, deeming that sufficient for the present, and leaving them to fill up for themselves, as their devotion suggested, the whole picture.

¹ St. Luke xxiv, 26.

If any of the Apostles followed the guidance which was thus given to their thoughts in this particular instance, they may well have been appalled at the prospect thus set before them. For there is no passage in the Prophets which speaks more plainly or fully of the sufferings of the Passion in general than that to which He had referred, and He had added, that 'the words concerning Me have an end,' meaning, as it seems, that the words of the Prophet applied to Him, and were now to be most completely fulfilled. Then, again, the words which He had spoken about the two swords could not have satisfied them, and they remained in trouble and sorrow and fear for the future, all the more, perhaps, because it was so uncertain. It was full time for suggestions of consolation. So our Lord went on to pour in one loving draught of comfort after another. The words which now follow are related by St. John, who becomes at this point our only guide as to the sayings and doings of our Lord during the remainder of the evening, except as to the one most important act of all, to which He only alludes because the other Evangelists had related it. The words of St. John are here capable of being read in different ways, for it is his habit to speak so concisely that the connection is not always expressed, and this passage, as well as others, reminds us of the exordium of his Gospel, in which we are sometimes left in uncertainty where a sentence begins and where it ends.

'Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me.' These words are ambiguous in the original, because the word 'believe' may be either in the indicative or the imperative, and the

same word is used in both clauses of the sentence. Our translation, apparently rightly, makes the word in the first clause indicative, and in the second imperative. But it might be rendered grammatically either, 'Believe ye in God, believe ye also in Me;' or, 'You believe in God, you believe also in Me.' But our Lord is here suggesting, as we have said, the thoughts or the instructions which may give the Apostles the courage and peace of which they were so much in need. It seems then most natural that He should first speak by way of exhortation or precept, and bid them rest upon Him with the same firm faith and confidence with which they had been taught from childhood to believe in God, that is, in the Father. For the Jews had not usually the clear knowledge of the distinction of Persons in God, and although the Apostles may have been far advanced beyond the greater part of their countrymen in the intelligence of the great mystery of the Adorable Trinity, they still needed a more explicit and perfect faith in the Three Divine Persons in the One Godhead, and this faith would have been of immense help to them in the trial to which their confidence and faith was now to be exposed.

The Apostles believed that our Lord was the Son of the living God. They believed that He was God, and yet they required a more firm grasp of the truth, which they would not have thought of denying, that He was the One God in Whom they had always believed, One with His Father and the Holy Ghost, in the possession of the Divine Nature. We shall find our Lord recurring to this more than once in the discourses which follow. In the course of the few months before this time, we find the Apostles

asking our Lord to increase their faith, and He answered them then by speaking of the wonderful power which a strong faith would give them. Later on in this same evening, He tells them to pray in His Name, and says that hitherto they have not asked anything in His Name, as if the habit of asking everything through Him had not yet been established among them. This may have been, perhaps, because He was habitually with them, but in any case there must have been a great difference in the use of definite full-grown faith in Him in persons who did not use His Name in that way, and persons who did. Moreover, the asking in His Name, as we shall see, has a peculiar meaning and significance when the power of His mediatorial Sacrifice is understood, and this had yet to become full known to them. In this sense their faith in Him must have been continually growing and capable of further growth.

He begins His instruction now, then, as has been said, by bidding them make, as we should say, acts of faith in His own Divinity in which He is One with His Father. They were to see Him presently in the hands of His enemies, after witnessing His Agony and bloody sweat in the Garden. They were to see Him led as a lamb to the slaughter, without a word of self-defence in His mouth. They were to see Him subjected to all the insults and outrages which were to be heaped upon Him during the night and next day, until at last they were to see Him die on the Cross between the two thieves, without resistance from Himself or succour from His Father throughout the whole of those hours of anguish. What was to be their support under such a trial? They could have no support, save that

which was the firm support of His Blessed Mother and the Saints by her side, who stood under the Cross, as far as they shared her unwavering and most clear faith—the faith that He was God. ‘You believe in God, believe also in Me;’ let this faith burn all the brighter in your hearts, the more you see in Me of human weakness and of abandonment by the Father, the nearer and nearer that you see Me draw to the most utter extreme of abasement and destruction, believe in Me and trust in Me for all the support and strength that you require, trust in Me as your God. The words are very few and very pregnant, and we cannot be quite certain that we have all the words that our Lord spoke on this and other similar occasions when they are reported to us by the Evangelists, who may be giving us only a part of what was said, the substance of what was enlarged upon in other words by our Lord Himself, Whose words, however, were always few and short. But this is given us as the first note of consolation and strength in the discourse of this evening at this point. The words may be understood as bidding them exercise their faith more largely and universally, as has been said, and also as bidding them believe in particular the series of most gracious and loving promises and gifts of which He was now about to speak.

Nor can we doubt that our Blessed Lord, at the same time that He bade His Apostles revive and enlarge and deepen their faith, in the various ways in which it was to be exercised, gave them, from His own bountiful treasures, large measures of the higher and stronger faith which He asked of them, and of which He was about to demand so much in the course of this evening. It is His way to make

the particular virtues which He demands of us, at particular times, more easy to us by His own special assistance. We find it commonly recurring in the history of the Christian centuries, that He is thus large in His gifts, when their exercise is particularly required by the trials to which particular generations or communities, who may be under peculiar trials of persecution, or the like. Thus all through the earlier centuries we find a peculiar vigour and clearness of faith, which is also seen in later times, as, for instance, in the Church of Japan in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the children of which went to martyrdom of the severest kind with a certain wonderful exuberance of joy, and the same gift seems to have been remarkable in our own day in some of the new converts from the lowest forms of heathenism in the interior of Africa. Certainly the acts of the early martyrs are full of the gift we speak of, and it is not likely that our Lord would require this exercise of the Apostles here in the first place, without pouring in wonderful graces to enable them to bear the strain. He was dealing with those whom He loved most, and whom, as it were, He would feel bound to strengthen, especially as their sorrow came from love for His Sacred Person.

After this instruction about the exercise of faith, our Lord goes on to add other topics of consolation. The greater part of the trouble that they were now under sprang from the announcement that He had made to them, that He was about to leave them, and that whither He was going, they could not accompany Him. The Apostles clung to our Lord in a way and to a degree that we can hardly imagine. It is nothing uncommon for men to be extremely devoted to a teacher or to a protector, or to some one

whom they love most intensely; and in such cases the idea of losing him seems almost as death to them. But there can never have been earthly attachment and dependence like that of the attachment to and dependence on our Lord, on the part of the Apostles. Never was there anything so attractive in the world as our Lord's Sacred Humanity, never had there been so perfect an abandonment of all other ties, as that with which they had given up everything else and devoted themselves to Him. They trusted Him absolutely, and they had nothing in the world but Him. He was their light and their life, and the world was a howling wilderness to them but for Him, and as He said, He had gathered them together out of the world, and if He failed them they had nothing else. The next sentences show us how gently and lovingly He shed balm into their wounded hearts, first in one way and then in another. 'In My Father's house there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you also may be. And whither I go you know, and the way you know.' Every word is a fresh assurance of comfort. He had not before spoken of the place to which He was going. Now He tells them it is the house or home of His Father. He implies that His home is their home also, and it is a home of the magnificence and comfort of which they can form no idea. It is ample and large, there is room for all. It is true, indeed, that He is going away, but it is not to be separated from them. 'In My Father's house there are many mansions'—many places of abode, and rest, and dwelling.

They thought that His departure meant losing Him, separation from Him, His withdrawing into some realm of inaccessible light, where He would be alone with His Father, and where no one like themselves could find entrance. If it had been so in truth, they would have heard of it from Him. The very reason why He had not said this was that it could not be. Those who love one another and are most closely united take it for granted, that if they are to be really separated even for a time, they will be told that the separation is to take place. They do not require to be told if they are to continue to be together. They had not been told of it, because it was not possible that His new home should not be theirs. It is worthy of remark that the very word which our Lord uses in this passage, which is rendered in our version by the English word 'mansion,' has the special sense of stability, permanence, something that belongs to those who dwell in it, as our own word 'home,' which perhaps would be the best word by which to translate it. It only occurs in one other passage in the New Testament, and that is a little later in this discourse, where our Lord says that if any man love him 'he will keep My Word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode' or home 'with him.' The verb from which this is derived, and which has passed into our language in the verb 'remain,' is far more frequently used by St. John than by all the other writers of the New Testament taken together. Very often it is used by him in relating the words of our Lord, so that we may consider it a word of which our Lord was fond. Thus our Lord touches the hearts of the Apostles by the very word He uses in speaking of the 'home' that awaits them with

Him in Heaven, as if merely by that He wished to dispel their fears about their future separation from Him.²

Thus did our Lord abundantly satisfy the doubts of His Apostles which had arisen in consequence of His assertion that He was going from them and that they could not at present accompany Him. In the first place He is going to His Father's home. How could they doubt that it was to be a home for them as well as for Him? Our Lord's thoughts concerning His Father's home would represent it to Him as peopled by myriads of happy and blessed angels, who were all yearning for the company of the Apostles and the other redeemed from among mankind, who were to supply the places of those brethren they had lost, spirits like themselves, but who had not persevered in obedience to their Lord and King. It was not perhaps the time to speak to the Apostles of this glorious company, for Heaven was not yet open to the children of men, because our Lord had not yet suffered and risen and ascended, and besides, the single thought which engrossed the hearts of the Apostles was that they were to be separated from Him. The presence of our Lord is the light and joy of Heaven, as He said to the Good Thief on the Cross, 'This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.' So He only says now, 'many mansions.' But we may conclude that He meant covertly at least to imply that there was room for them, and for many more than them. We find St. Paul drawing out the picture in more than one place, as when he tells the Hebrews that they are come 'to Mount

² It is not meant that we take it for granted that our Lord spoke in Greek—which He may or may not have done—but that St. John uses the word as the best Greek for what our Lord said.

Sion, and to the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels, and to the Church of assembly of the first-born, who are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament.’³

Our Lord had just before this said to them that they were those who had continued with Him in His temptations—how could He fail to take them with Him into His glory? He had added that He disposed, that is, authoritatively allotted, to them a kingdom, as His Father had disposed a kingdom to Him; that they were to eat and drink with Him at His table in His Kingdom, and sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. They had forgotten His words, or had not understood them. They certainly implied that they were to be with Him, and now they were imagining that there would be no room for them where He was,—for those who were to eat and drink at His table! He does not pause to describe further the kingdom to which they were destined by-and-bye. For the greatness and magnificence of His Father’s house was not easily to be spoken of in human language, especially to those who had so little of intelligence concerning it as to imagine that it was lacking in room for friends so dear to Him. He simply says that in His Father’s house there are many mansions. His mind habitually contemplated all the glorious dwellings of the saints and angels, the vastness and exquisite beauty of each, the variety which added a fresh beauty to the whole by its contrasts and harmonies, and the extreme splendour and felicity of the

³ Hebrews xii.

multitudes who dwelt therein. If there could have been any lack of place for His friends He would have told them. Even His very object in going was to prepare it for them; but it was already ready, or to be made ready, when He went before to take possession of it for them. St. Paul has something of the same thought when he says that, 'We know that if this our earthly house of this dwelling be dissolved, that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'⁴

In one sense the kingdom of the saints is prepared for them before the foundation of the world in the eternal decrees of God. But those decrees did not allow of their taking possession of the kingdom at the moment at which our Lord spoke. For the kingdom was only to be opened by our Lord, and thus it is theologically accurate in the strictest sense that He would go and prepare a place for them. In another sense, in which St. Paul speaks, their home was to be built up gradually by our Lord for them, in correspondence to their gradually accumulating merits and sufferings in His service here below, to which their glory in the next world will accurately answer. So that in truth, that very thing which was the cause of their great sorrow in losing Him for a time, was but the preparation of the future, for He was to be occupied in preparing for them the abode of bliss which was to be theirs for ever. This therefore is the second source of courage with which our Lord furnishes the Apostles. They looked on themselves as almost deserted by our Lord, left alone and helpless in the world without Him, and without knowledge of whither He was going, or means of communication with Him, as if all the intercourse between them

⁴ 2 Cor. v.

was at an end. They learn now that it was to His Father's house that He was going, the home that was theirs by right as well as His, that His absence was to be only for a time, and for the purpose of allowing Him to make ready for them a place in this wonderful home which He does not describe further, because its delights and treasures were beyond all description and above the reach of all human imagination. And they learn also that He is to return for no other purpose than that He may take them thither, instead of leaving them to find their way for themselves, that where He is, there also they may be with Him. What the effects of this promise were on the hearts of the Christians of the first ages, we see in their eager desires and anticipations of the time to come when the pledge was to be fulfilled by the second advent of our Lord, as shown to us incidentally in the Epistles.

Our Lord speaks reservedly and shortly about the kingdom or home of His Father, for the reason, perhaps, which we have already hinted at, because Heaven was not as yet opened to the children of men. But we may consider His words, few as they are, as containing, as is often the way with Him, the germs of the whole future doctrine concerning Heaven which was to become a familiar contemplation to the children of the Church. The expression of 'many mansions' contains in itself the multitudinous variety of the inhabitants of Heaven, the immense company of the Blessed, of which St. Paul, as it were, instinctively speaks, and, by implication, the truth of the intense happiness which results from the mutual offices and love of the Saints, who rejoice, each in every one who is there, as a cause of joy to himself. The Church was a new

revelation to mankind in the way of mutual charities and consequent happiness and joy. Men no longer were pent up within the walls of a particular family, or city, or nationality, small and miserable homes indeed for the hearts which have learnt the love of God and of their neighbour in the school of Jesus Christ. All Christians were brethren and sisters, not merely potentially but actually, though it could not but be felt how poorly their present powers of affection, shackled moreover by the narrowing influences all around them, would permit the full expansion of charities even among the children of the Church. But at all events, the Catholic Church was a revelation to mankind that there was to be something better than this miserable world by-and-bye, when love and affection were to have their full scope in the many mansions in Heaven where there were to be no divisions or separations, nothing that could chill to any extent the full exercise of the most boundless charities. This doctrine is really contained in what our Lord now said about 'many mansions.'

'And whither I go you know, and the way you know.' These words set forth a further consolation, which our Lord here provides for the Apostles. He has hinted at the richness of the home which was to be His and theirs, at His own part in preparing it for them, and at His future coming to fetch them to it. He adds now that they know already where it is and the way by which it is to be reached. The language is that of One who speaks of their having knowledge, which they did not fully realize, and who desires them to ask Him more fully about it. You know it already, He seems to say, if you will but think over what you have heard about it. For when people possess the elements of knowledge

without using them by the proper application and reasoning, they are said to know things really, though they do not know they know them. Our Lord means, it seems, to say that they know He is going to His Father, and they know that the way to His Father is by Him, and, as they know Him, they know both His Father and also Him as the way to His Father. But He wishes them to ask Him more explicitly, in order that He may draw out, unfold, and perfect the knowledge which is to be so valuable to them. Then the blessed St. Thomas, who always reasoned deliberately and comparatively slowly, asked Him at once. His was one of the most loving hearts in all the Apostolic band, though he did not rush to conclusions or instinctively divine them as St. Peter or St. John. St. Thomas said unto Him, 'Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?'

Our Lord answered the simple question of His faithful disciple by words which raised the subject-matter of the conversation to a higher level, and at the same time gave the instruction which was most fitted at the time to the state of mind of the Apostles. St. Thomas was thinking of a path, or road, along which our Lord was going to take a journey, which would separate Him from them, and as they did not know to what point or in what direction He was to take His course, it seemed to them impossible that they should, as our Lord had said, know the way. But our Lord speaks of returning whence He had come, and of the path along which those who are to follow Him to the glory, whence He came, must pass in order to reach it. He was returning to His Father, and those who were to be His throughout eternity must pass along the path which led to the

presence of God the Father in Heaven, and there was no other way for the attainment of that glory but by Him. What He now says in what He calls 'proverbs,' was the same thing as what He said plainly at the very end of the discourses of this evening. 'I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world, again, I leave the world, and I go to the Father.' Then the disciples seem to have been greatly relieved from their depression, and burst out into expressions of love and confidence which our Lord had even gently to calm down.

It is worth while to spend a few moments in considering the contrast between the state of mind of the Apostles in the two cases. The distance in time was not great. The difference must be accounted for by the many solemn teachings of our Lord in the interval, and particularly by what had taken place, as we suppose, in the same time, no less a grace than the first celebration of the Adorable Sacrifice of the Altar, and the administration of the Holy Eucharist for the first time to the Apostles. This shows us how fruitful and prolific of spiritual light and strength were the sacraments of the Church when they fell on loyal hearts and pure souls, in which they find no impediment to their fertilizing power. We see also at the same time the immense power of our Lord's Divine words spoken to the Apostles, although we know that they did not always correspond at once to the teaching which they received from Him, and although their enlightenment was not incompatible with great weakness, when they were not fervent in prayer, as they all failed to be in the dark hours of Gethsemani. But there must have been great growth in them from the instructions and graces which they received from Him in the Cenacle.

Our Lord spoke at that later time as One Who knew perfectly all that was about to happen, and His language is not so much of reproach as of sorrowful wondering, when He tells them that they will presently leave Him alone. He knew they were to fail, but also that they would soon be rallied around Him, and that they were then to spend whatever remained of life in great labours and fruitful works for His service.

At the time which we have now reached this was still in the future. He had to deal with them for the moment as children, so frightened were they at the thought of losing Him. He had to raise their thoughts from the material things of which they were too full, to the simple spiritual realities which they did not yet understand as was required for their support under the great trial which was imminent. He begins with the mention of the way, by which they meant a path leading from one place to another, along which He was about to go. But the true way along which they were to pass after Him was the knowledge and love and obedience of the Father, and the true goal of their journey was the sight of God in the Beatific Vision hereafter, and what knowledge of God can be had here, by those who are hereafter to come to the enjoyment of that vision. 'Jesus saith to him, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, no man cometh to the Father but by Me. If you had known Me, you would without doubt have known My Father also, and from henceforth you shall know Him and you have seen Him.'

It does not seem difficult to understand what our Lord means when He calls Himself the Way, for, indeed, as He says, no man can come to the Father,

in the sense in which He speaks, but through Him, by believing in Him and His doctrine, by following His example, and by union with Him through His grace. But if we ask the question, what He means by saying also that He is the Truth and the Life—and it is to be remembered that He uses here the definite article in the original Greek, as if to say, ‘I am the one and only Way, the one and only Truth, and the one and only Life,’—the answer is that it seems as if He meant to tell them far more than they had asked Him by the mouth of Thomas. For He seized every opportunity of raising their conceptions concerning Him higher and higher. The language of St. Thomas was consistent with some lower and more material thoughts about Him than were true, and our Lord seems to wish to teach them that in His own Person they had all that they could possibly require, not simply a way, as if He had pointed out a road in a certain direction, which might serve them as far as that direction went, but a way full of light in which they could make no mistake about the truth, and a way which gave them not only light and truth, but also life true and spiritual. For it is said of Him in the opening of this Gospel of St. John, ‘In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men. . . . He was the true Light, that enlighteneth every man, . . . the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.’

It is true that our Lord was not asked to tell the Apostles more than the ‘way.’ But it was not His wont to confine Himself with His friends to what was absolutely necessary by way of answer. They wanted far more than they knew how to ask. The simple answer about the way might have led to other

questions and a long catechizing, if we may so speak, at the end of which they might have had to ask Him things which He now tells them without waiting. To arrive at the knowledge of the Father they must grow in their knowledge of the truth, and to use the truth profitably, they must be spiritually alive, for the lost angels may have an immense knowledge of God, and yet cannot be said to live to Him truly. Moreover, at the time at which He spoke these words, the Apostles had every need of having their faith in our Lord's words confirmed, for He was to make them very great promises, and to teach them very great mysteries, that is, He was to make great demands upon their faith. Their profitable reception of all these spiritual treasures depended on the readiness and depth and solidity of their faith in Him as the essential Truth. And immediately after the revelations of this evening, the great storm of the Passion was to fall on Him and them, and drive them for a time from His side, and He was even to suffer, before their eyes, as it were, the most painful and ignominious death. It was well, therefore, that He should thus assure them and confirm their faith in the truth, that He was Himself the essential Life, indestructible by all the power of the world and of Hell, Life inextinguishable and eternal, with the power to raise Himself from the dead when He chose, and the source of life to all, in what manner and measure it pleased Him. The right intelligence of passages like this in which our Lord's own words come before us, is to be gained by seeing all that the Catholic faith allows us to believe as to the meaning conveyed by them in their natural sense, and if we do not see how His words are to be applied, to suppose that He had a more

clear conception of the needs of those to whom He spoke than is possible for us. Moreover, He was now straitened for time, so to say, and felt desirous, perhaps, of putting forth one great truth upon another as far as they were able to bear them, knowing that, if they did not completely understand Him now, His words would burst forth in fresh fulness of meaning in their hearts under the illumination of the Holy Ghost by-and-bye.

He goes on to tell them that they did know the Person to Whom He was going, that His words were true, 'Whither I go you know, and the way you know.' It was true that their knowledge both of our Lord Himself and of His Father was imperfect, and this explains the apparent contradiction of their knowing and not knowing both. He says, 'If you had known Me, you would without doubt have known My Father also, and from henceforth you shall know Him and you have seen Him.' That is, there is something imperfect about your knowledge of the Father which is caused by the imperfection of your knowledge of Me. It is true to say you know the way and you know whither I go, but at the same time you know both so imperfectly that in one sense you do not know either. But I am about to enlighten you more fully, and after this communication of knowledge on My part, you shall know Him far better, and in truth you have seen Him. These last words are like those in which our Lord had said that they knew the way and the whither, that is, He meant to draw from the disciples further questions, by attributing a more perfect knowledge than they were as yet conscious of possessing. They had seen the Father, because they had seen our Lord, Who was One with the

Father in Essence and Nature, and it was because they had so imperfect a grasp of this truth that the words sounded so strange in their ears. But when they learned to sound the depths of the truths which they already imperfectly knew, they would find that what He said was true, and that they had seen the Father.

The Apostles were gathered round our Lord without having as yet left the supper-table, and were talking freely to Him without reserve, encouraged by the great condescension of His manner, and the great marks of affection which He was showing them. One after another took his part in the conversation, for they were all full of the same eagerness, and all felt more or less of the same difficulties. The gentle and loving Philip was the next to take up the thread of the discourse. He, like the rest, was perplexed to understand the words they had just heard about their having seen the Father. 'Philip saith to him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us. Jesus saith to him, So long a time have I been with you, and have you not known Me? Philip, he that seeth Me, seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself, but the Father, Who abideth in Me, He doth the works. Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? Otherwise believe for the very works' sake.' The words of St. Philip were a sort of modest questioning of what our Lord had said, that they had seen the Father. Only make these words true, he seems to say, and we are satisfied. All that they required was that they should see the Father, as they saw our Lord.

Our Lord answered by gravely inculcating the truth of His Unity of Nature with the Father. 'So long a time have I been with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip?' He appeals to the long time of His Ministry, during which He had been more or less their daily companion, and in which He had said so many Divine words, and worked so many miracles in their presence. They ought to have known that He had the same Divine Nature with His Father. If that was so, they must have been able to conclude from their knowledge of Him that the Divine Nature was in Him, and that Nature could not be separated or divided. His works and words showed Him to be God, for while His miracles showed Him to have the power of God with Him, His words directly implied that He was God, and His miracles proved that His words were true, unless God could work them in support of what was false. And He spoke of God His Father as being a Person distinct from Himself, while He spoke of Himself as possessing the Divine Nature which could not be divided.

'Philip, he that seeth Me seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself, and the Father that abideth in Me, He doth the works.' Here there are two means mentioned by which our Lord's Divinity might have been shown, His words and His works. Both of these He declares to have been His Father's, Who put into His mouth, as it were, the words He spoke, and the doctrine which He taught, and Who guided and prompted the works which He wrought in confirmation of His teaching. 'Believe you not

that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?' These words are in many Greek copies affirmative, not interrogative. 'Believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me,' and this reading seems to be confirmed by the sequel, 'Otherwise,' that is, if you do not believe this because I say so, 'believe for the very works' sake.' For our Lord constantly referred to the works which His Father gave Him to do as proofs of the truth of what He said and what He claimed for Himself, though it was higher and nobler to believe Him simply because He said it, than to believe upon the evidence of His miracles.

The substance of this passage appears to be that the true knowledge of our Lord was the revelation of the Father, and that therefore those who knew Him well would know the Father also. In that sense also He was the Way and the Truth and the Life, and no one could come unto the Father but by Him. It was not possible for the Father to be seen by mortal eye, for no man can see God and live, but seeing our Lord in His Sacred Humanity, and knowing Him with that thorough and familiar knowledge which as His Apostles they might have acquired, under the teaching of the Father, after He had been with Him so long, they might have known Him, not only as Man, but with a discernment of the hidden and invisible Divinity within Him, and by the knowledge of His Divinity and Sacred Person they might have been led on to that knowledge of the Father of which He speaks. Our Lord speaks to them here as to persons who know more than they can explain, and He does this with the object, as it seems, of drawing out for them the knowledge which they possess, but do not understand in its fulness.

When St. Peter had made his great Confession, our Lord told him that flesh and blood had not revealed it to him, 'but My Father Who is in Heaven.' It can hardly be supposed that the same Divine teaching of the Father had not produced the same kind of knowledge in the hearts of others among the Twelve, if not at all. There may have been some among them who were more illuminated than others, both in consequence of their comparatively greater or smaller diligence in cooperation with this Divine light, and also from other causes. For God is wonderfully delicate in the process of illumination, and does no violence to nature even in raising men above their nature. The pattern of all who grow in such Divine enlightenment under the guidance of God seems to be our Blessed Lady, who from the beginning of the history is set before us as 'keeping all these words, pondering them in her heart.' This was what practically the Apostles were doing on occasions like this of which we are speaking. For the questions which they asked of our Lord were a kind of pondering, and the answers which they received from Him, so often in the form of questions put to them in return, put their minds, so to say, through the process of a kind of instruction, a great part of which was the unfolding to themselves of what they knew already, as it were, without having reflected upon it. Our Lord's words sank down into their minds, as seed into a good soil, which may not in a moment develope all its hidden riches, but which becomes fruitful, not only by its own inherent fertility, but by the forces and elements latent in the soil itself. So, although this series of questions and replies of our Lord may not at once have flashed a wonderful light into their

minds, we cannot suppose but that the result was that they came to know the blessings which they had been so long enjoying in the companionship of the Incarnate Son, that they understood that He was on His way, not by any material or visible road or path, to His Father in Heaven, that they already knew much of that Father themselves, and that they were in due time to come to the full knowledge of the invisible and inseparable Oneness of the Divine Nature in Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER VIII.

Promises to the Church.

St. John xiv. 13—24 ; *Story of the Gospels*, § 156.

THE last words of our Lord of which we have been speaking, were an appeal both to His words and to His works as evidences, in different ways, on which the faith of the Apostles in His Divine Person might be grounded, and He had mentioned specially His works, that is, His miracles, as such an evidence. But our Lord had more in His Heart than the simple consolation of His friends under a most deep, but yet a passing, sorrow, and all His words of solace and encouragement were at the same time great revelations of the mercy of God, and announcements of gifts to the Church of lasting and most wonderful magnificence. He may have begun with the topics of consolation which were adapted to the state in which their minds were at the moment. But He seems also to have begun His discourse with the distinct purpose of pouring out upon them gift after gift, and promise after promise, which were intended in the Divine Counsels for their benefit, independently of the grief in which they were at the moment plunged. Having raised their thoughts to a higher level as to His Oneness with the Father, He passes without any great change of subject to these marvellous gifts which were about to be bestowed on them after His departure.

The transition is suggested by His last words about the evidence of His Oneness in Nature with His Father. He had mentioned, as He more than once mentioned before, the proof of His Divinity which was contained in His marvellous works. He naturally proceeds to the great promise made to believers, of working similar, and even greater, works in His Name. Here we seem to pass to a new and very fruitful head of this discourse of our Lord. It is as if He had not contented Himself with the wonderfully consoling truths which are set forth in His words in the last chapter, but had added further consolations in the form of the series of promises of which we are now to speak. These may be looked on as topics of consolation, like the former words which have just been considered. Now they may be considered by themselves, as what they are in truth, predictions of great treasures which are to be given to the Church as her resources and armament for her warfare in the world, which must necessarily be great consolations, but which are mentioned now by Him, Whose manner it was to keep His best to the last, as was said in the marriage-feast at Cana, in order that the sorrowful hearts which were mourning over His approaching departure, might gather strength and comfort therefrom. We shall have to consider them one by one, and see the might and magnificence with which the gifts are fraught. And yet now, as always, our Lord speaks as if they were comparatively light blessings which are thus poured forth upon the Church, and He seems to pass from one to another rapidly, as if it was not then the time to dwell on them much, or draw out all the mighty powers which are thus conferred upon her. But we may remind ourselves here of what has been

already said as to the brevity with which the Evangelist tells what he has to relate.

As has been said, this chain of great promises springs naturally from what our Lord had just said concerning the evidence in support of the truth of His Mission furnished by the wonderful works which His Father had given Him to do. 'Believe you not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? Otherwise believe Me for the very works' sake.' That He was One with the Father and the Father with Him might have been gathered by thoughtful minds from all that He said and did, and His whole character and demeanour, but at all events it might be concluded from His miracles. Then He continues, with His usual solemn asseveration, 'Amen, amen, I say unto you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do, because I go to the Father, and whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask Me anything in My name, that I will do.' In these words of our Lord more promises than one are contained, and we need not confine the assurance here given, as to the power of prayer in His name, to the works, similar to and greater than His own, of which He speaks at first, as proof of His Divine Person and Mission.

The promises do not stop here. He goes on, 'If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him, but ye shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you.' This is another most wonder-

ful promise, and we shall find our Lord returning to the subject before the end of the evening. But we are not now to dwell on the promises one by one, but to set them before ourselves as a series.

The next promise is of a distinct and separate blessing, as we shall endeavour to explain presently. 'I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more. But you see Me, because I live, and you shall live. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.' Here one of our Lord's own relations among the Apostles, Jude, the brother of James, broke in with a question which enabled his Master to explain what He had said more fully. 'Judas saith to Him (not the Iscariot), Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us, and not to the world? Jesus answered, and said to him, If any man love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make our abode with him. He that loveth Me not, keepeth not My words. And the word which you have heard is not Mine, but the Father's Who sent Me.' Here we may pause, for although in the words of our Lord which follow it may certainly be said that some gracious promises are contained, the language and subject-matter are somewhat different in tone from that of the sentences which we have been relating.

We are first to endeavour to explain to ourselves what our Lord here says about works greater than those which He has Himself done, which are to

be performed by those who believe in Him. 'The works which I do, he also shall do, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father, and whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.' The words must have sounded strange to the disciples, who could hardly have found it easy to imagine any works greater than those which our Lord had done in their sight, and these moreover done, not by Him, but by others like themselves in His name. Perhaps we ourselves, with all the history of the Church before us, feel inclined to wonder at the magnificence of the promise. There are some who would explain this promise by certain miracles of the Apostles, which seem to them greater than those wrought by our Lord Himself, as when the shadow of St. Peter cured the sick who lay in the streets as he passed by, and cloths were taken that had touched the body of St. Paul for the same purpose, or the like. These seem hardly likely to be made the subject of a promise like that here given, nor can we suppose that such miracles are in truth greater than those performed by our Lord.

It is also said that our Lord worked no miracles of punishment, such as St. Peter worked when Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead at his word, or St. Paul, when Elymas, the sorcerer, was struck blind for opposing him. But our Lord cursed the fig-tree, and sent the legion of devils into the herd of swine, and if He did not strike His enemies blind or dead, it was from no want of power, but rather because He did not choose to use His power against them in that particular way.

But there are other ways in which the promise

may be understood. Our Lord may be speaking of the permanent or recurring miracles which were to take place regularly in the Church, but which had not begun yet, nor were they to begin until after the Passion. Such was the great miracle which has been repeated in so many cases in the lives of the Apostolic saints, the miracle of Pentecost, when the words spoken by the Apostles in their own language were heard by each man of the mixed multitude to whom they were addressed in his own tongue.

Such also certainly is the power given to the priests of the New Law, by which, day after day, on a thousand altars, by men like ourselves, the Blessed Body and Blood of our Lord Himself are made really and truly present in the Holy Sacrifice, a miracle which requires the exercise of the most wonderful powers of God's omnipotence, and yet takes place as regularly as the rising and the setting of the sun, which we should call miraculous if we were not so accustomed to them. A miracle is a transgression or a supersession of the laws of nature, and surely there can be nothing more supernatural than the powers granted to the priests of the New Law in the sacraments. St. Paul certainly speaks of the wonders worked by the ministers of the New Testament, as surpassing the powers of the Angels. He says the message of the Gospel was 'begun to be declared by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard Him, God also bearing them witness by signs and wonders and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will. But God had not put in subjection to the Angels the powers of the world to come, of which we speak,' meaning, apparently, that the Christian ministers exercise powers which reach beyond this world at

the present time, which give them a character of their own.

But it may be thought that miracles of this kind may not be within the meaning of our Lord's words, Who speaks in the first instance of miracles like His own, and then of greater miracles also. There is a class of wonders wrought by the Apostles and their followers which fill all history with the greatness of their effects, and which it did not seem convenient to our Blessed Lord to work Himself, or which at all events He left to them to do in His name instead of doing them Himself. The establishment of the Christian religion in the world was itself one of these, the conversion of multitudes by the preaching of a few fishermen, and as St. Augustine says, if the faith was not established by the most marvellous wonders, it was itself the greatest of all marvels that it was established without them. The conversion of the world is a marvel that no philosophy can explain. Every power was against the Church, all the political powers, all the physical powers, all the interests, all the influences, all the passions that have any weight in determining human action, all the might of the Roman Empire was exerted physically, all the force of philosophy and learning was exerted morally, and the faith which earth and Hell had combined to extinguish in the blood of its votaries came out triumphant and sat itself in the throne of the masters of the world.

The conversion of the Empire was followed by the conversion of the barbarians who overthrew the Empire, and since that time, the gates of Hell have taken to working against the Kingdom of Christ from within by heresy and schism in a thousand various forms, and the Church remains unshakable

against all, herself a greater miracle that any that have been wrought outside her. It would take us too long to dwell upon this great history in detail, but what has been said may be enough to point out the line of interpretation of our Lord's promise which is thus urged. The Church herself is her own greatest evidence.

Our Lord says later on in this discourse, when He comes to explain a little more fully the work of the Holy Ghost in the world, that the Holy Ghost will convince or convict the world of three things, of sin, of justice, and of judgment. These words will take long to explain at length, but the convincing of the world of justice, which our Lord says shall be shown because 'I go to the Father, and ye shall see Me no more,' is understood to mean that the fruits which the Holy Ghost will produce in the hearts and lives of the faithful after the withdrawal of our Lord to His throne of power at the right hand of the Father, will be such as to convince the world that poor weak mortals like ourselves are capable of the very highest and most supernatural achievements of sanctity. The Church is not only Holy with the holiness of God, in her doctrine and teaching, but in the manner and degree in which that teaching has been reflected and made prolific of results in the lives and characters of her Saints, who are a creation by itself, a work which witnesses in the highest degree to the Divinity of her Founder, yet it is the work of the teaching and training of the hierarchy and the priesthood and the whole teaching body in her, a result which the world cannot gainsay, any more than it can imitate. The whole of it springs from our Lord, it is His work as He sits in Heaven at the right hand of the

Father. Whatever good work or prodigy of grace is accomplished anywhere in the Catholic Church, is the fruit of His merits and of the Precious Blood shed by Him on the Cross, it is wrought and accomplished in any one or by any one because that person is a member of His Body, and has his whole life and energy and fruitfulness from Him.

And yet we see how true it is that our Lord's own visible part in the great work of the application of the fruits of the Precious Blood is comparatively small and insignificant. He left about one hundred and twenty disciples behind Him, His Apostles converted as many nations. He preached in a corner of a small country, they preached all over the world unto the ends of the earth. He left the dominion of paganism and idolatry still standing in all its hideous deformity, they destroyed it. The disciples of a Man Who was crucified on Calvary, and of Whose very existence the world hardly heard while He lived, overthrew the false systems of religion and philosophy all over the world, and founded a Kingdom the frontiers of which are always advancing century after century. These are some of the achievements which we may call to mind as fulfilments here made by our Blessed Lord.

We find two reasons that may be given for this feature in our Lord's disposition of the great works which have to be wrought in the carrying out of the Divine Counsels in the foundation and extension of His Kingdom upon earth. No one can doubt that it was in His power to do everything Himself that was necessary and convenient for the purpose in view. If He forebore to take to Himself the greatest and most specious portions of the great conquest which was to be accomplished,

it was only because He chose and saw fit that so it should be. But there is a great deal to be learnt by a study of the reasons which may be given, and they reveal and impress upon us much matter for thought as to the character of our Lord Himself, as well as the ways of Providence in the Economy of the Incarnation.

In the first place, then, it is most true that until the Passion was accomplished the grace of God was not in a certain sense as free as afterwards to work to its full power for the salvation of the world. Our Lord Himself tells us this when He says, 'I am sent to send fire upon the earth, and what would I, but that it be kindled, and I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished.' For according to the arrangements of God's Providence, the fire could not be kindled until the baptism of the Passion was accomplished, as the laws of the dispensation of God required the suffering before the full display of the fruits which that suffering was destined to purchase. Thus we may say of our Lord that, all through His Life, He was doing what was necessary as the foundation of all that was to be afterwards, but that what was to be afterwards was to be indefinitely more magnificent and overwhelming and stupendous. He spoke of Himself as the corn of wheat which was to be cast into the earth and die, in order to give birth to the teeming life which was to succeed it. He came in humility, in obscurity, in contempt, and in weakness. It is true that what He did in the way of wonderful works was more than was necessary to convert the world, and that if He had not done so much of this kind among the Jews, they would not have

been guilty, as they were, in rejecting Him. Still it was also true that it was natural that the fruits of the Precious Blood, after it had been shed, were to be far more magnificent than any display of power before that time. It may also be remembered that before the victory over sin and death, which was accomplished by the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, the Holy Ghost was not to come, and the Church, which was the appointed weapon for the application of the Precious Blood, and through it the salvation of the world, was not yet organized.

We may also remember there was another reason for the obscurity and apparent weakness with which our Lord clothed His presence in the world. This reason is that which is attributed to the blessed martyr, St. Ignatius of Antioch, who assigns as a reason why it was decreed that our Blessed Lady should be an espoused wife at the time when our Lord came into the world, that the marvellous Conception of the Redeemer might be concealed from the Evil One, and might not appear to have any supernatural character. God could do whatever He chose, in spite of all opposition. But He chose to give to the entrance of His Son into the world an appearance common and ordinary, that the enemies of the plan of salvation might not suspect the great act of mercy which had taken place. What was true of the entrance of our Lord into the world, may also have held true of the whole course of the Incarnation, and of the foundation thereupon of the Kingdom of Redemption. The Counsel of God was to be carried out in a humble and quiet way, *Multiformis preditoris ars ut artem falleret*, and that the princes of this world might be made to cooperate against their will and unwittingly to the destruction

of their own empire. We are told that to the very last Satan and his fallen angels did not know what they were doing, any more than Caiphas and Pilate. And thus it may have been ordered in the decrees of God that the greatest powers of the Kingdom of Heaven were not put forth by our Lord Himself, but afterwards through the Apostles and the Church.

It does not belong precisely to the matter before us, but it may be remarked that there is the same kind of gentleness and restraint as to the exercise of great striking power, especially in the punishment of the enemies of God, in His providential government of the Church in her tempestuous navigation through successive centuries, which characterized the Life of our Lord Himself. As we read the marvellous history, we are inclined to break out as St. James and St. John, and 'call down fire from Heaven as Elias did,' on the enemies of the Church and the Saints. It is very true, and hardly a generation passes without some exemplification of the truth, that those who are conspicuous for lifting their hands or raising their voices against the Bride of Christ are not often left unpunished, even in the eyes of men. For God is in a manner bound to vindicate His own Institution the Church, His instrument for the salvation of the world and 'the healing of the nations,' and so, though fire does not come down from Heaven on her assailants, there is usually some expiation required of them, some signal temporal overthrow or calamity, which makes the ears of those who hear of it tingle. But even in these measures of punishment and warning, God shows Himself gentle and merciful, for He does not ordinarily punish without giving time for repent-

ance, and He prefers letting men find out their own misery, when they have injured the Church, before He sends the chastisement, which is even sometimes delayed for a generation before it falls.

Another thought which suggests itself here is that the arrangement of which our Lord here speaks, by which His disciples and ministers were to be endowed with powers like, but greater in some respects to those which He Himself exercised in His lifetime, is a fresh and most precious revelation to us of His Sacred Heart, the meekness and humility of which has made Him prefer this method of leaving the greatest wonders to be wrought in His name by others after Him, Himself setting us thereby the example of that abnegation, that fleeing from all that is conspicuous, that love of putting others forward and taking ourselves the more laborious and humble parts of the work of God, of which there are so many imitations of our Lord among His Saints and followers. The great St. Francis of Assisi would never accept the priestly dignity, and there must have been thousands among the unknown Saints of the Church who have caught the lesson of the humility of heart of which our Lord may perhaps be giving us an instance in the dispensation of which we are speaking. If we look at the work of the redemption of mankind, it is true that He alone has done it all—*torcular calcavi solus et de gentibus non est vir mecum*. Here His Blood was required, and one drop of it would have sufficed. He shed it all, and would let no one share with Him the Sacrifice. But as far as was seemly, as to the great and conspicuous labours by which the Precious Blood is applied to the souls of men, He took of this work just enough, just what was required, that He might

he a perfect Model of an Apostolical worker, enough to sanction and hallow by His touch the labours which that touch alone could bless and make powerful and fruitful, and He left the great achievement of bringing about the conquest of the world to the Kingdom of His Father to thousands of the weak children of Adam, who worked in His name and in His strength.

There is thus a great depth of meaning in the reasons which our Lord here assigns for the fact which He predicts, namely, that the wonderful works which He has performed will be continued by the faithful after Him, and that they will in a certain sense be exceeded by them in magnitude. He says they shall be exceeded, because in the first place He is going away and will no longer be visible upon earth as a worker of wonders. The proof of His Divine Mission and Nature will be left to others, and He will leave earth, after having been put to death by His enemies, which He speaks of as going to His Father. For there is not in this discourse of the Thursday evening, any direct mention of suffering and humiliation, which He probably avoided in order to spare their hearts. And the humility of His departure from before the eyes of the world was to be compensated, so to speak, by some extraordinary glorification on earth as well as in Heaven, according to the doctrine of St. Paul,¹ who tells us that because He became obedient unto the death of the Cross, God was highly to exalt Him and give Him a Name to which every knee should bow. Our Lord also seems to imply the same truth in His opening words after the exit of Judas, when He said that 'God was now to be glorified in Him, and if God was to be

¹ Philipp. iii.

glorified in Him, God would also glorify Him in Himself, and would do so immediately.'

Our Lord adds in the next place that He is going to the Father, Who had sent Him to accomplish the work of redemption by His humiliation. The work of redemption would then be accomplished, and He would then be, as it were, free to do greater things through His disciples than through Himself. For He had said of the time during which that humiliation lasted, that He was straitened till it be accomplished. We see there were many things during that period of lowliness and abjection which it would not have been convenient for our Lord to do, which yet might have advanced the glory of God and the conversion of the world, if these ends had not to be served by humble and less magnificent ways. He came to redeem by the Cross, and that imposed on Him the necessity of being such as the world would crucify. He came to defeat the wiles by which man had been misled, and He had, as has been said, to avoid scaring the enemy, who had misled man by his wiles. What He did no man or angel could have done. He shed that Precious Blood, one drop of which was able to redeem a thousand worlds, which nothing else could ransom. He came to open Heaven, which the prayers and sacrifices of the whole created universe could not have enabled us to enter. He came to found the Church, to institute the sacraments, the priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, the Sacrifice, which alone is worthy of the God to Whom it is offered. These were greater things than man or angel could ever accomplish. But for great wonders outside Himself, and which did not embody the acts of His Divine Person, such as were the miracles of which He was

now speaking, it was more convenient for the purposes of God that He should work these in greater magnificence through His servants after He had left earth, than by Himself. No good in any order, moral or spiritual, miraculous or sacramental, but has its power and efficacy singly from Him, but as He has entrusted the preaching of His Word and the administration of His sacraments to instruments and servants, so also He has left to those who believe in Him and work in His name, the signs and wonders, moral and physical, by which His Word has always been attested. As a matter of fact He preached only in a small portion of the country of Palestine, in a corner of a corner of the world. His own converts were few, He left no writings behind Him, His name was unknown while He was living to the great centres of human life and power and intelligence. The work of the Church is the only great work worth speaking of in the history of the world. But the work of the Church, though it is all His, has been done in His name and by His power by others.

The next words of our Lord suggest a further reason why certain very great works should be done by the disciples of our Lord after His departure, but we are not to disconnect them from the preceding clause, for they are in truth a continuation of one and the same sentence: 'Because I go to the Father, and whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask Me anything in My name, that I will do.' He repeats twice over the promise to prayer in His name, and each time He says that He will do it, and not that He will ask the Father to do it. He speaks therefore of His own inherent

power as God or of the plentitude of power which He received after His Passion as Man, and He says, 'I will do it.'

There is no tautology about this repetition, because in the first instance our Lord seems to be speaking of the granting of miracles and wonders at the prayer made in His name, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. This seems to refer particularly to the great things which are to be wrought as evidences of the truth of His Mission and of His religion. In the second instance the words are more general, and seem to apply to all cases in which prayer may be made in His name, as when private persons ask something for the benefit of their own souls without begging miracles or visible favours. But our Lord gives us this great encouragement, putting our prayer in His name among the great powers which were to be, as it were, something new in the Church after His departure, a power that will account for what appears the wonderful statement that His faithful disciples shall then do greater works than He Himself has performed, 'because they shall ask in His name. There is no limit to what may be expected from this promise, and when we consider how the Christian religion is what the poor savage converts are beautifully taught to call it, the 'Christian prayer,' how the life of the Church is prayer, we may be led to understand the simple truth which is the fulfilment of the promise, not only that our Lord will do whatever is asked in His name, but that the wonders that will be gained from Heaven by prayer thus made will be greater in certain respects than the mighty works which He Himself wrought in the days of His humiliation. There is no fear now lest the redemption of the

world might be hindered by too great displays of power on the part of our Lord. The battle has now been fought and the victory won, and there can be nothing more conducive to the success of His great work in the world, than that His faithful children should use to the full, habitually and faithfully, the immense power thus placed at their disposal.

It is natural that questions should be asked concerning the precise meaning of the great words on which we have been speaking. Like all our Lord's promises, they are to be taken in the simple meaning of the words, and according to the analogy of the faith. It appears that our Lord in this discourse was especially careful to arouse the Apostles, and through them all Christians, to the immense privileges of their condition, and to let them see that the great Sacrifice of the Passion which was about to be consummated, would place all those who belonged to Him and in any way represented Him, or had a right to plead His merits and powers before God, on a higher level than had before belonged to them. He says that He is going to the Father, and that one of the issues of that departure out of the world through the Passion was to be that there should be a great outburst, as it were, of profuseness and munificence on the part of God, that the Father might thereby be glorified in the Son. To ask the Father anything in His name was to unlock the treasures of the beneficence of the Father in favour of those who used His name rightly and lawfully. It will be seen in other passages of this discourse that our Lord seems to wish to stimulate them to prayer in His name, which it may be supposed had not been a common or ordinary practice with them while He was with them.

There is nothing very surprising in this. By His great Sacrifice on the Cross He was to acquire immense powers as Mediator between God and man, and these powers were to be something new, and their effects in practice would depend to some extent on the faith of the Church in Him and them, which would be exercised especially in prayer through His name, that is, in petitions and supplications addressed to God asking for benefits and graces of all kinds in His name, and through the merits of His Sacrifice. This is illustrated by the first Apostolical miracle after the Day of Pentecost, of which we have the detailed history in the Acts² of the Apostles. St. Peter and St. John go up into the Temple, and there they see the impotent man who lay at the Beautiful Gate. St. Peter bids him rise up and walk in 'the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,' and speaks at some length to the people, insisting that the miracle had been wrought by God to give honour to our Lord. 'The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath glorified His Son Jesus, Whom you indeed delivered up and denied before the face of Pilate, when he judged He should be released, but you denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted to you, but the Author of Life you killed, Whom God hath raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. And in the faith of His Name, this Man Whom you have seen and known, hath His Name strengthened in the sight of you all.'

The sequel is too well known to be repeated here at length. But the words of the Apostle to the Chief Priests are too much to our subject to be omitted.

² Acts iii. iv.

‘Ye Princes of the people and ancients, hear, . . . be it known unto you and to all the people of Israel that by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Whom you crucified, Whom God hath raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand before you whole. This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other Name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved.’ And after the Apostles have returned to their own company, we find the whole body solemnly joining in prayer to God, and asking for a continuation of the like favours. ‘And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant to Thy servants that with all confidence they may speak Thy Word by stretching forth Thy hand to cures and signs and wonders, to be done by the Name of Thy Holy Son Jesus.’

This story of the first miracle recorded in the Acts shows the practical exercise of that faith in our Lord’s name which is here enjoined on the Apostles by Himself. It can hardly be thought that when, in the time of His Ministry, they had been sent out with power to work miracles, they had not used His name in the same way. We are also told of the seventy disciples who were sent later with the same powers, that they came back rejoicing to Him, and said that even the devils were subject to them in His name. But it seems natural that the universal use of our Lord’s mediatorial office, whether in prayer generally, or in the asking for preternatural favours, should be one of those powers in the Church which were to become prominent as great features of the New Dispensation, after the consummation of His Sacrifice rather than before, and this seems to

be the proper theological reason why the Holy Church makes it a rule to direct the prayers in her liturgy ordinarily to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. In prayer in His name as He here enjoins it, He may mean many things as to be implied as conditions of success, such as that the petition be made for the person himself, and for the good of his own soul, or that it be made in charity and in the state of grace, and in accordance with His will, and the like.

It is also true to say that He means also that we must be such as belong to Him, and have a special right to plead His name before God, as is the case with those who are members of His Body in the Catholic Church. No doubt there must be many who are separated from Him without their knowledge and without their fault, and these may use His name in good faith, and belonging, as is said, to the soul of the Church, though not externally to the Body, and such persons may pray in His name for themselves and be heard for His sake. But we must remember the incident mentioned in the Acts³ of the Jewish exorcists, who fared so badly at the hands of the demoniac over whom they had invoked our Lord's name as, 'Jesus Whom Paul preacheth.' Those persons must have believed to some extent in the power of our Lord's name over the devils, and it is not necessary to think that they made their exorcisms in bad faith. But they had no right to use the name which was borne by the members of the visible community of the Christian Church, remaining themselves in Judaism, and the devils were permitted to teach them this lesson. As a matter of history, the claim to have a right to speak to God

³ Acts xix.

in our Lord's name and demand, as may be said, the fulfilment of this promise as to the great works of which He is speaking, is seldom found to last long in those who feel themselves, for whatever cause, to be separated from the One Body of which St. Paul speaks.

‘If you love Me keep My commandments, and I will ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive because it seeth Him not nor knoweth Him, but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you and be in you.’ The injunction with which this paragraph begins, ‘If you love Me, keep My commandments,’ occurs again and again in this discourse of our Blessed Lord, like the refrain in some beautiful piece of music, so that we need not always be anxious to examine what is the connection between it and the words which immediately follow it or precede it. Here, however, the connection does not seem difficult to find. Our Lord has exhorted them to the exercise of faith, and to the practice of prayer in His name, which is to be the key by which they are to unlock the treasures of the mercy and power of God. It is natural that an exhortation to the keeping of the commandments should follow, as obedience and faithfulness are essential conditions to the success of prayer. And this sentence seems to be connected with what immediately follows, that is, the promise made to the Apostles of the great gift of the Holy Ghost, the Divine and magnificent fruit of our Lord's going to the Father by the Passion. ‘And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of

Truth Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him, but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you.'

Our Lord speaks in this sentence as the Incarnate Son, when He says, that He will ask the Father, and He shall give them another Paraclete. For the mission of the Holy Ghost, of Whom He speaks, was the fruit of the merits of our Lord, and in this it differs from His own Mission, which no merits could purchase beforehand, but was an act of pure mercy and compassion for the miseries of mankind. The gift of the Holy Ghost is thus the fruit of the Passion which merited it, and our Lord tells us also of His intercession as Mediator, and therefore He speaks of 'asking' the Father, although in other places He speaks of the same Holy Spirit as sent by the Father in His Name, and also as being sent by Him from the Father, and as proceeding from the Father, and He calls the Holy Ghost 'another Paraclete,' showing that He is a different Person from Himself. He is another Paraclete, because He will discharge the same office of Paraclete which our Lord had hitherto discharged Himself. The word means, one who exhorts, encourages, arouses, comforts, consoles, and also one who prays for, and is an advocate for, another, and it is in all these senses that it is here used of the Holy Ghost.

He is to be sent by the Father as the Gift won by the merits of our Lord, and at His request, pleading those ineffable merits, and asking the Gift for the sake of them as the just reward and guerdon of them. He is to abide with them for ever. The Gift is never to be recalled from the Church, and is to endure for ever, for He will be the source of life

and light to the Blessed in Heaven throughout all eternity, though perhaps the words may only directly signify the contrast between our Lord's absence, of which He has been speaking, having been on earth only for a few years, and the permanence of the presence of the Holy Ghost. So they will gain by our Lord's going away, as He says afterwards, in having another Paraclete to take His place, Who will never go away, but remain till the end of the world. Our Lord calls Him the Spirit of Truth, because it is His office to enlighten and teach them the truth in all things, and He insists upon this several times in His discourse, as when He says, 'He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said unto you,' and that, 'He shall give testimony of Me, and when He is come, He will convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment, and that He will teach them all truth.' Other great benefits are attributed to the Holy Ghost in other passages, for He is the Spirit of love and of peace and of joy, as well as of truth, but this seems to be the office of the Paraclete of which our Lord is here speaking.

He adds that 'the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him, but you shall know Him because He shall abide with you and shall be in you.' The Holy Ghost was to come, but not as the Eternal Son had come, taking human flesh and form, and so capable of being seen. There is this difference, then, between the two missions, and as to outward visibility, the world and the Apostles would be under the same incapacity with regard to the cognizance of the coming of the Holy Ghost. But there would be this all-important difference, that worldly and sensual men can take

no cognizance of anything that does not present itself to the senses, and so, as they are unable to perceive spiritual existences and powers, the presence of the Holy Ghost will be utterly imperceptible to them. But with the Apostles and the faithful, it will be different, for they will be able to recognize His presence in a spiritual manner, which will be both with them and in them. He will remain with them as our Lord had remained with them hitherto, as their Teacher, their Master, their Guide, and this may be understood of His presence in the Church, especially as the Teacher of Truth, as our Lord has said.

But the Paraclete here promised will be more than with them, He will be in them, because He will pour His gifts and fruits into their hearts, and abide in them by that ineffable presence of which the Apostle so often speaks, whose words are indeed in this, as in other instances, an expansion under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, of this and other similar expressions of our Lord which He did not at the time draw out in their full meaning. 'He shall abide in you, and be in you.' . . . We shall have other opportunities of dwelling upon the other great things which are said by our Lord in this discourse concerning the Holy Ghost and the benefit which His coming will confer upon the Church, as the occasion rises and the words occur. It must be remembered that the passage now before us is, if we are not mistaken, a kind of summary of the chief gifts which He was to leave behind Him, given for the sake of the consolation and encouragement of which the Apostles were now so much in need. He does not therefore say all that He has to say concerning some of the greatest of these gifts, for more reasons than

one. We shall find this remark especially true with regard to the next great gift of which He speaks. 'I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more. But you see Me, because I live, and you shall live. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.'

Our Lord here goes on to speak of another great head of consolation, distinct from any that He has as yet set before them. 'I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you.' It is not therefore merely that the Holy Spirit will be sent, another Paraclete from the Father, to take, as it were, our Lord's place in guiding and consoling the Apostles, He Himself will come to them. A Paraclete, it might be said, is not necessarily a Father, and our Lord, in the beginning of this conversation, spoke to them as His 'little children.' He tells them now that He, their Father, will come to them Himself, so they will not be left orphans. 'A little while, and the world seeth Me no more. But you see Me, because I live, and you shall live. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.' There is some questioning among the commentators as to what time it is to which our Lord refers, when the world shall not see Him, but the Apostles shall see Him. It seems to be obvious that the words refer, in the first instance, to the short interval that was to elapse between the speaking of these words and the Passion and Death of our Lord, when the world was no longer to see Him. Then was to come, and very speedily indeed, His Resurrection to life, after which the Apostles were to see Him as before, though intermittently, for the forty days which were to pass between the Resur-

rection and Ascension. Some writers think that He speaks also of what was involved in His Resurrection in the plan of God's Providence, that is, their own resurrection at the end of the world. For our Lord rose not only for Himself, but for all of us, and our resurrection is but a fruit and consequence of His, and then the Apostles and all of us will see Him, because He lives, and we shall live.

This may be true, but that the words may fully answer the purpose of consolation, for which these sentences were especially spoken, it seems as if we ought to find in them some assurance which extends to the long time between the Ascension of our Lord and the second Advent, during the whole of which period, of a length unknown to us, the other promises which our Lord here makes will be fulfilled in the Church. The promise, for instance, of the great works which those who believe are to work for the glory of the Father in the Son, the promise of the efficacy of prayer made in His name, the promise of the abiding of the Holy Ghost with us and in us for ever, all apply in their fulness to the period after the Ascension till the end of the world. It is natural to expect that when our Lord says He will not leave His children orphans, He does not mean merely during the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension, and no longer, as far as the life of the Church in this world lasts. And it is difficult to limit in this way the statement that 'in that day you shall know that I am in the Father, and you in Me, and I in you.'

It is the opinion of a great number of commentators that all this discourse as given by St. John, was spoken by our Blessed Lord after He had administered to the Apostles, and perhaps to others,

the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. But although this opinion may not be certain, on account of the great doubt that must exist as to the point in the narrative of St. John at which the institution of the Blessed Sacrament should be inserted, it cannot be making any great demand on us if we are told, as some other writers suggest, that our Lord may be in these few verses referring to that mode of His coming to us which is found in the Blessed Sacrament, either by way of preparation for It, or of explanation of It, after Its institution. It may be that the Blessed Sacrament was not yet instituted, but It was to be given them in a very short time, and was to be a permanent and ineffable blessing worthy of being ranked with the gift of the Paraclete Himself. We think, then, that our Lord is here speaking of a gift which may be called more directly personal, a gift of His own presence as the Incarnate Son, such as is signified by the language which He uses when He tells them He will not leave them 'orphans.' He calls them at the outset of this discourse by the endearing name of His 'little children,' and indeed in His Sacred Humanity He had been more than a Father to them, although the name by which He went among them may have been Lord or Master, rather than Father. But as St. Paul speaks to his converts as his children, or his little children, our Lord to the Apostles, in the time of His sojourn on earth, must have been more a Father to them than any of the Apostles could ever have been to their spiritual children.

The name 'orphan' expresses just the relation in which they would find themselves to Him when deprived of the visible presence to which they had been accustomed, and it could not be said so fitly

without the Paraclete or the guidance and teaching of the Eternal Father Himself, Who had dealt with them so lovingly in leading them to our Lord, they would have been 'orphans' in the same sense as the word applies to their separation from Him as He had been with them. The word orphans, therefore, suggests the truth that He Himself Who had been with them hitherto was to be with them afterwards in a new manner, but the same Person as before, and this leads us at once to the thought that He is here speaking of His sacramental presence. This new kind of presence is not limited in time or in place, and so is something greater and better than the manner in which He was with them before. By the mercy of God, and the tender forethought of the Sacred Heart, it is as true and as full of blessing now as it was after the Resurrection, and wherever the Adorable Sacrifice is offered and the Blessed Sacrament reserved, it is as fresh and new and as full of ineffable graces on the most distant island of the New World as it was in the Cenacle of Jerusalem itself.

We are led to the same conclusion by the words which our Lord here uses about the effects of this new kind of His 'coming' to them. He says, 'Because I live, and you shall live,' that is, you shall live by the life by which I live, or you shall live because I live, as He had said in the synagogue at Capharnaum, 'As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me the same shall also live by Me.' He spoke of Himself in that discourse as the living bread that cometh down from Heaven, and said that the bread which He would give was His Flesh which He was to give for the salvation of the world. He also spoke of that living bread as

the gift of His Father. That is, the thought that connects the lives of Christians with the Blessed Sacrament, which was prefigured by the manna which their fathers had eaten in the desert, seems to rise naturally to His mind when He is speaking of the Blessed Sacrament. Such language does not seem so natural in the fullest sense, if it is used of grace or of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. We therefore prefer this interpretation, extending the meaning somewhat more widely than has been done by some great commentators, as Toletus and Maldonatus, and supposing it to apply to the whole period of the life of the Church on earth to the end of time, and to include all the manifold manifestations of our Lord's most tender love, whether in Holy Communion or in the Adorable Sacrifice or in His permanent dwelling in the Tabernacle, in which He makes Himself our companion as well as our victim, our reward as well as our food, as St. Thomas sings, giving us even a sort of foretaste of those blessings which in their fulness and truth are reserved for Heaven, but are yet by an anticipation of ineffable love made known to us even on earth.

‘In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.’ The meaning of this clause must depend upon the extent which we attach to the first words, ‘In that day.’ Those who limit ‘that day’ to the time immediately after the Resurrection, which ended with the Ascension, and then to the eternal days of bliss in Heaven, take the words of the whole clause as promising to the Apostles the clear knowledge of the three great mysteries of faith, the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Redemption. The knowledge of the Blessed Trinity will come by the knowledge of the distinction

of Persons in the one Godhead, 'That I am in My Father.' The knowledge of the Incarnation will come by their seeing their union with our Lord through His Incarnation, in which He has taken their flesh and raised the whole nature that He has taken, and through which they become members of Him, of His flesh and of His bone, as St. Paul says. Their knowledge of the mystery of Redemption will be gained by their intelligence of its fruits in them, and their elevation to the 'capacity' of being made the sons of God. But it seems not less natural to understand Him, when He speaks of Himself as being 'in us,' of the fruits of the Blessed Sacrament, in which He comes to us in this new way, as has been said. Who shall be able to reckon up the fruits of intelligence and grace which are produced in the devout and faithful partakers of this great gift, of which it is difficult to suppose that our Lord was not thinking when He was enumerating to the disciples the special blessings by which what they considered their forlorn and desolate condition after His departure were to be consoled and enriched? The truth seems to be that He does not speak fully of them at this point of the discourse for the very reason that He was soon to make them partakers of the very Banquet to which He here alludes. It would not have been natural to leave out all reference to that Banquet in this catalogue, so to call it, of the treasures of love which were to be theirs after His departure, but at the same time the institution of the Blessed Sacrament was imminent, and then He might either speak of it more at length or refer them to instructions which He had already given.

We must remember, however, what has already been said, more than once, that the explanation of

institutions like that of the Holy Sacrifice, the Blessed Eucharist, the Christian Priesthood, and indeed the sacramental system generally, seem to have been among the subjects about which the authors of the Sacred Books of the New Testament did not receive the commission to give detailed explanations, although we do not doubt that such explanations were fully given by our Lord to the Apostles. It may be a matter of debate when those instructions were given, whether later on in this same evening of Holy Thursday, or after the Resurrection, when He spent so much time in speaking of the Kingdom of God, as St. Luke says, or before this time, in some of the many days which He spent in a kind of retirement with the Apostles. We are free to think what seems right to us on this point, and others like it.

Still it may be said now, with regard to what may seem a strange suggestion, that some instruction on the Blessed Sacrament had been given by our Lord before this time, that it must on reflection seem very improbable that no words had ever passed our Lord's lips on the subject at this time, since the great dispute on the matter which was held in the synagogue of Capharnaum after the miracle of the Five Loaves. That was a full year before this date. It had left the doctrine of the Adorable Sacrifice without explanation, and it was a dispute with our Lord's enemies, not a confidential discourse with His intimate friends. The words of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, which are given without any comment by the Evangelists in their short accounts of this evening, seem evidently to refer to former instructions, and our Lord gives His own precious Body and Blood as if the Apostles under-

stood the whole 'Mystery of Faith,' just as Holy Communion is administered in the Catholic Church, as if the recipients were adequately furnished with the necessary knowledge. We can hardly think it respectful to our Lord to suppose that He did not do beforehand what one of His ministers would now think it wrong to neglect.

Here, again, comes in the refrain, as we have called it, about keeping the commandments as the one security for the reception of great favours from Himself and His Father. 'He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me, and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.' He has just spoken of the very intimate communication of Himself to them, which, if we interpret this passage rightly, takes place in the Holy Communion, which is especially the bread of life, the life of the soul, as He had said, in words which He has just repeated here, and the thought of that life-giving food seems to connect itself in His Heart with the thought of the keeping the commandments in their perfection. For the spiritual strength and perfection and delight, which are among the effects of the Blessed Sacrament in those who devoutly receive It, produce in the soul the robust fortitude and healthiness which enables it to stand against temptations, and to persevere constantly in virtue, while the eyes of the soul are enlightened to the discernment of spiritual truths. He says here that in that day they shall know that He is in 'the Father, and you in Me, and I in you.' And our Blessed Lord is careful to extend as widely as possible to all such persons the benefit, not confining it to Apostles or Apostolic men, but promising it to all

who keep His commandments, and feed their souls upon the life which His Precious Body conveys, 'in that day,' the day when this great boon shall be made the common property and privilege of the faithful in general.

He had used the same words about keeping the commandments as the mark of their love for Him at the outset of these two great promises, of the gift of the Paraclete, and of the gift of His own Presence with them in the Blessed Sacrament, and now He seems to repeat the same condition before mentioning another supreme gift, which He speaks of as the love of the Father and of Himself for them and the manifestation of Himself to them. The immense love of God for man had issued in the Mission of the Son of His love for their salvation, and those who close with the offer and keep the commandments as they know them, after being enlightened by the gifts already spoken of, will be loved in return for this by the Father, Who desires to confer on them the full privileges of being made His own sons, and the love also of the Sacred Heart will rest upon them, and He evidently implies that it will be in some way or degree which He has not yet specified. For there is no mere repetition in this chain of promises, they are expressed with great pregnancy and brevity, but, if we can arrive at recognizing it, there seems to be a special meaning in each one. In the present instance, the novelty and sublimity of the promise seems to have attracted the watchful attention of the Apostles, and one of those among them, who must have been very dear to our Lord, as he was His own near kinsman, put the question to Him, which probably more than one other wished to hear asked, as to the meaning of what He had just said.

‘Judas saith to Him (not the Iscariot), Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us, and not to the world?’ Some writers seem to have thought that St. Jude had in his mind a manner of manifestation, such as that by visions or apparitions, of the same class as the method by which our Lord dealt sometimes with the Apostles after the Resurrection, though in that instance the apparitions were, of course, not what are commonly so called, but real presences of our Lord, though concealed from the world. But it is not necessary to suppose that the Apostle had any definite manner of manifestation before his mind. He takes it for granted that our Lord is speaking of some kind of knowledge of Himself in which the world in general cannot share, for the language seems to imply something exclusive, and the manifestation is to be a great privilege. ‘Jesus answered and said to him, If any man love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make our abode with him. He that loveth Me not, keepeth not My words. And the word which you have heard is not Mine, but the Father’s Who sent Me.’

Thus did our Blessed Lord, in answering the simple question put by the Apostle, give him and the rest a treasure of Divine truth far beyond the immediate requirements of the questioner. For He did not tell St. Jude the manner only of the manifestation of which He spoke, and how it was to be at the same time open to those who loved Him, and hidden from the world which had rejected Him. For He enlarged the promise which had occasioned the question in two most important points. He had spoken of the love of the Father for him who kept His commandments, and He had spoken of His own love also for

such a person, and of His manifestation of Himself to that person. Now he adds what virtually answers the question which had been asked, but answers it by revealing more fully the magnificence of the Gift. It is not He alone, but the Father also that will not only love such a person, but He and His Father will come unto him, and make their abode with him. The simple mention of the Father Who cannot be seen, and has never become Incarnate, shows that He is speaking of some invisible visitation ; and when God is said to come to any one, it is meant that He produces some new operation or gives some new gift to the soul which is thus visited. This coming of the Divine Persons of the Father and the Son—for our Lord says ‘ We ’—is something new in the promise, and something more than the love of which He had spoken before. Moreover, He says now, not merely that He and the Father will come, as is implied in the word we have used, that of visiting, but they will make their abode with him. There is here some special and most gracious and permanent boon described in these few words, something different from the Presence of our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist, and from the promised gift of the Paraclete. Further, it is not possible for the two Divine Persons named in these words to be separated from the Third Person, Whose name our Lord does not introduce into the sentence for reasons of which we may speak presently. Thus therefore this promise is one which includes a special presence and abiding of the Eternal and most Adorable Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which is to be vouchsafed to the persons of whom our Lord is speaking.

The language of our Lord in this and other passages is not to be considered, of course, as con-

taining in it any exaggeration. The immense boons which it announces are meant by Him to be, in a measure and degree which may vary in different cases, common to those on whom these favours are to be conferred—that is, to Christians generally, and if in some it is not so, it is because of the coldness or the absence of that loving custody of the commandments and that faithfulness to grace of which He speaks, or of which He implies the necessity. These gifts are the fruit of the immense love of God, the Ever Blessed Trinity, for the souls of those made His by the grace purchased by the Passion of our Lord, and which in point of fact are but too little esteemed and corresponded to by those for whom the Precious Blood was shed. It must be remembered that the fruit of that Precious Blood in the souls of the devout and faithful Christian is spoken of as nothing less than a participation of the Divine Nature, and that St. John tells us, in words which are repeated so constantly in the Holy Mass, ‘To as many as received Him to them He hath given power to be made the sons of God.’ The sonship to God is the work of the regenerating and creating Spirit, the Holy Ghost, the Gift of Whom our Lord has already spoken of in this context as the result of His Passion and ‘going to the Father,’ though He is not specially mentioned as abiding in the soul in this sentence for a reason to which we have alluded already.

This is undoubtedly the teaching of St. Paul.⁴ He is not the only one of the blessed Apostles who has poured forth the treasures of Divine truth to us on this particular point, but he seems to have loved to take occasion, as it was offered him by the needs or questions of his converts, to speak of the effects

⁴ Rom. viii. 29.

in the soul of the presence of the Holy Ghost, and especially of His office in accomplishing the work of our adoption, which brings about that marvellous grace of the close union with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which seems to be wrapped up in these words of our Lord in the Cenacle. St. Paul tells the Romans, 'For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, for you have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons whereby we cry Abba, Father.'⁵ He tells them in another place that the 'charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Who is given us,' thus making a distinction between the Personal presence of the Holy Ghost and the gift of charity. He tells the Galatians, 'Because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.'⁶ We should naturally expect to find St. John himself, who heard these words of our Lord about the Father and the Son abiding with the favoured soul, repeating the thought in his first Epistle, which, as has been said, seems like a sort of introduction which might be prefixed to his Gospel. It is St. John who tells us, 'Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called and should be the sons of God. We are now the sons of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. . . . He that keepeth His commandment abideth in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.'⁷ But it would be an endless work if we were

⁵ Romans viii. 14, seq.⁶ Galat. iv. 6.⁷ 1 St. John iii.

to quote all in this precious Epistle which recalls to us the language of our Lord in this discourse.

What we are told here by our Lord amounts, in short, to this, that the most bountiful liberality of our God has shed itself out to the very utmost. In our justification He might have made us just and holy by the infusion of grace and charity, and this would have been an immense boon. But He has chosen also to make us His adopted sons. He might have carried out this gift of adoption by created gifts of grace and charity, for grace is a participation of the Divine Nature in the highest degree, as far as a created being can share that Nature not only naturally, but supernaturally. This, again, would have been an immense boon. But it pleased God to give Himself to us, to adopt us and sanctify us by the gift of Himself. The Holy Ghost gave Himself to us as well as His gifts, as well as His graces, and charity, so that when charity is infused by Him into our souls He Himself personally and substantially is given at the same time with them, as is shown by a number of passages in which the Apostle sets forth this wonderful condescension of God. But the passage on which we are occupied tells us something still greater, if anything can be greater, that the Holy Ghost, when He comes into the souls, brings with Him the other divine Persons of the Adorable Trinity, the Father and the Son, for the Three Divine Persons cannot be separated one from another. This is the truth which lies beneath the surface of the words of our Lord of which we are speaking, and in which our Lord seems to have before His mind the marvellous effects of the Divine communications which are thus made on the souls of the saints who are faithful recipients of the great and

ineffable favours of God, and who are allowed sometimes not only to be conscious, to some extent, of the graces they receive, but even to be able to describe them to others, though the language which they use is obscure to those who have not the experience which belongs to them.

A passage from one of these favoured servants of God, the glorious St. Teresa, in which she quotes and comments upon the words now before us, may be fitly used as a commentary upon them. In the later chapters of her most wonderful work, *Las Moradas*,⁸ she has been speaking of a state of prayer and Divine communication, in which, as she says, our Lord unites the soul to Himself by making her become as it were blind and dumb, as St. Paul was after his conversion, and by taking away from her the power of apprehending the manner of the favour which she enjoys, 'for the great delight which the soul feels is from her seeing herself drawing near to God; but when He actually unites her to Himself, she neither understands nor knows anything, for her faculties are all lost and absorbed.' 'Herein,' she continues, speaking of a still more perfect form of prayer, 'it is after another manner, for now our good God is pleased to take the scales away from her eyes, that she may see and understand something of the favour which He does to her, though it be after a marvellous manner. By an intellectual vision, in a certain way of representing the truth, all the Three Divine Persons of the Most Holy Trinity discover themselves to her, with a certain inflaming which

⁸ This work is often quoted in English as the *Interior Castle*, or the *Castle of the Souls*, as well as the *Mansions*. The passage is in the *Seventh Mansion*, c. i. (Old English Translation), p. 268. The English work was printed—it is not said where—in 1675.

first comes upon her spirit after the manner of a cloud of extraordinary brightness, and these Three Persons distinct; then by an admirable knowledge given to the soul, she with great truth comes to understand that all these Three Persons are one Substance, one Wisdom, one Power, and one God alone. So that, what we hold by faith, the soul here, as one may say, understands by sight, though this sight is not with the eyes of the body, for it is not an imaginary vision. All the Three Persons communicate themselves to her, and speak to her, and make her understand the words of the Gospel, where our Lord saith that He and the Father and the Holy Ghost would come and dwell with the soul that loves Him and keeps His commandments. O my Lord,' she goes on, 'what a different thing is the hearing and believing those words from understanding after this way how true they are! and such a soul is every day more astonished, for that they never seem to depart from her, but as that she manifestly seeth after the manner aforementioned that they are in her interior in the most profound receptacle thereof, . . . which how it is she cannot express, for want of learning, and perceives herself this Divine company.'

We may remark that St. Teresa, by a true instinct, quotes the text before us as if our Lord had mentioned the Holy Ghost as well as the Father and Himself, for, as has been said, where the Two Persons are there also must be the Third. It is to be noted, as furnishing the reason why the name of the Holy Ghost is not mentioned in this sentence by our Lord, that the disciples had not asked Him about the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, and might even have been perplexed by the mention of Him at the time that they were receiving so many new truths

concerning the Divinity. It is difficult to suppose that they had not already far clearer ideas concerning the Divine Persons than were common at the time among their countrymen; but, at the same time, our Lord, even in stating to them the most sublime truths, was careful to observe a great caution and reserve even with them, lest confusion might take possession of their minds. He said just enough when more would perplex them. There may have been other reasons besides this for His careful language, and perhaps it is not impossible to see in passages like this that the perfect statement of the truth, as well as the perfect guarding them against error, required just the language which He used to them. Once the presence of the Two Divine Persons, the Father and the Son, secured, it would be easy to understand that the Third could not be absent, as we see in the instance before us of St. Teresa, who mentions the Holy Ghost as a matter of course, if we may so speak, not from any false reading of the text, or from a slip of memory, but because she had so firm a grasp of the truth about the Unity of the Three Persons in One God-head, as indeed is shown by her language about that Unity.

Our Lord next proceeds to a negative statement on the same subject-matter, which is required by its importance in itself and in order to avoid misconception. The immense boon of that familiar intercourse between God and man of which He has just been speaking is within the reach of all, because all who belong to our Lord as Catholic Christians have a right to the full benefit of adoption of the sons of God which is wrought by the gift of the Holy Ghost. But it would be inconvenient to leave what is unfor-

tunately the state of what may be the great majority of Christians, who do not live up to their high privileges, unmentioned, lest it might be thought that even the familiarity with God, the Three Divine Persons, could be vouchsafed to those who do not in any way appreciate their inheritance. It is our Lord's way with His great promises to add a word or two which may meet the case of such persons. He has told the Apostles the glorious happiness which is to be the lot of the believers who truly love Him. Now He adds the contrast, though He says but little, because He does not wish at this point of His treatment of the topics of consolation to say more than is enough. 'He that loveth Me not keepeth not My words.'

If He had filled up the sentence in words corresponding to the former part of the statement He has made, He might have had to say that he that loveth Him not shall not be loved of His Father, or shall be cast away by His Father, as He says somewhat later on about the man who does not abide in Him. But He says nothing of this kind. He only says what He afterwards repeats about the Jews, that the words that have not been kept are not His, but His Father's, meaning, of course, not only His, but the words of His Father, Who has sent Him to speak them, and implying that the retribution which will be made in case His word is despised and love not given to Him, is the concern of His Father, Whose word has been neglected, not His alone. We find this thought recurring more than once in this discourse, as when He says of the Jews, that now they have both seen and hated Him and His Father. And it is indeed impossible, as we may say, that our Lord should have made His great promise of this gift of Himself

to man, which is made by God in the way of, which we have spoken, and not had present to His mind the fact of the manner in which this, as well as His other great boons, were in matter of fact to be treated by men. But He says no more. He simply leaves the Apostles to conclude, from the ineffable magnificence of the elevation thus accorded to our poor nature, what must be the guilt and ingratitude of those who turn away and make light of the loving condescension of the Adorable Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Here our Lord seems to pause in the statement of the gifts which He is conferring on them as a consolation for His own visible and sensible companionship which they are so soon to lose. Indeed, the gifts of God can rise no higher than this which He has just mentioned, and which seems to exhaust the munificence of God Himself, because it is the gift of the Inexhaustible. In these few verses He began by promising them the power of doing greater works than His own, as well as works of the same kind. Then He made a larger promise, because more universal in telling them of the power they should have through prayer in His Name. Beyond this comes another great gift, the gift of Him Who is especially called the Gift of God, the Holy Ghost the Paraclete, Who is to be sent by the Father at His prayer in His Name to carry on His work, and take His place with the Church, and Who is to be with her not for months or years only, but until the end of time, and not with the Church only collectively, but in the hearts of her children, 'He shall abide with you, and shall be in you.' Then He adds that this presence of the Paraclete will not supersede His own true Presence with them in a new way. He

will not leave them orphans, He will come unto them. And we seem to see that He here signifies that great blessing of which there might be no other mention in this list of boons, if it is not to be thus understood, the perpetual Presence of our Lord on the altar in the Blessed Sacrament. They are to live because He lives, as He had said before in the disputation about this great subject in the synagogue of Capharnaum. And, last of all, He places that most intimate and tender individual intercourse between Himself, the Father, and the Holy Ghost, which is the lot in every age and every place in the Church of those loving souls who truly give Him their hearts.

CHAPTER IX.

The Gift of Peace.

St. John xiv. 25—31 ; *Story of the Gospels*, § 156.

AT the point which we have now reached in this relation of the discourse of our Lord which is given us by St. John, He seems clearly to make a break in His words, although the interruption appears to be owing to the simple fact that the chain of the promises with which the Church was to be endowed has reached its greatest height—for what promise can go beyond that with which we have just been dealing? We cannot imagine that there was any exhaustion of the loving consolation by which He was strengthening the hearts of those whom He was about, for the time, to leave. The words which follow are plainly a kind of conclusion or summing up of what has been said, and a promise that what may have seemed too obscure or too overwhelming, on account of the greatness of the gifts that had been spoken of, would soon become more clear to them by teaching of another kind. It must, indeed, have strained the minds and hearts of the Apostles, high as they may have been already raised in their knowledge of the goodness of God, to take in at once the wonderful truths which they had just heard set forth so simply and shortly. Seldom, in all the long time during which they had been His

companions, had they listened to announcements like these. It was our Lord's way, as has often been said, not to enlarge on His own gifts, and also to state Divine benefits in simple language, which was to sink into their hearts, like the good seed of which He spoke, there to unfold its beauties and its richness.

The Apostles, after promises like those just made so shortly and so pregnantly, must have felt overwhelmed by the consciousness that they had received a great treasure which it would take long for them to understand in any fulness. And if the thought of our Lord's approaching departure recurred to them, as was almost inevitable, it must have added another weight to their sorrow, that they should have to make out all that was thus conveyed to them for themselves, at least without having Him at hand to refer to for explanation and development. They had still, indeed, that gracious leading on by the Father, of which He more than once had spoken, and of which they had already much experience, under which one truth had insensibly led to another in their minds, as they thoughtfully pondered over what they had seen and heard. An instance of this is mentioned to us by our Lord Himself, when He tells St. Peter that flesh and blood had not revealed to him the great truth about His Divinity, but the Father Who is in Heaven. But this teaching of the Father had been greatly founded on what they had heard and seen from our Lord Himself, and now they could not but feel that this was to be lost to them. It is apparently to meet this difficulty, and further to educate them in the knowledge how perfectly the teaching of the Holy Ghost was to be founded on

His, as well as to supplement and fill the place of His, that He now begins by referring them to this new teaching, and to encourage them to hope great blessings from it.

It was to be the office of the Paraclete, among other great works in their hearts, to teach them gradually all that was contained in these gifts of God, of which our Lord had now spoken for the first time. He seems to wish to tell them that there were treasures contained in what He had now said which they would learn by-and-bye, what He said they 'would not know at once, but they would know hereafter.' 'These things have I spoken unto you, abiding with you,' in the way and in the measure of revelation of the truth which belongs to My present manner of communication of the things of God. 'But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you.' Our Lord here explains one of the offices which the Holy Ghost is to discharge in the guidance of the Church. For He is very desirous that they should understand at once what it is that they have with them in the presence of the Paraclete. Perhaps He mentions this first, because it is so plain that they will require a fuller explanation of these great promises in particular, which He has just been speaking of. The time was very short, and these mighty truths were to be gradually learnt by experience throughout a long course of years. But they are referred by Him to the Paraclete as their great instructor, and then they would find that His teaching, though different from that of our Lord Who had come in visible flesh and conversing with them as a Man among them,

yet was in truth to be even more than a continuance of all that they had hitherto had.

The Church was to be spread by them all over the world, while the visible presence of our Lord in His Sacred Humanity was necessarily limited to one place at one time. It was, as they now were told, limited in duration also, and after a short time was to cease altogether, while they were to be dispersed over the whole globe and separated one from another. There was to be no limit to the duration of the presence with them of the Paraclete, Who was to be with the Church in all times and all places, and His instruction was not to be confined to this or that head of doctrine, which might have been, in the case of our Lord, the subject of His teaching at any particular moment, one thing at one time, and another at another. The Paraclete would teach them all truth according to all the exigencies and conveniences of the time being, and He was to bring to their mind all things whatsoever our Lord should have said to them. In this description of the office or function of the Paraclete, as it is here unfolded by our Lord for their consolation and encouragement, there are several distinct heads of truth which must be spoken of in succession.

In the first place, we may notice that our Lord here mentions something about the Blessed Paraclete which added new lines to those He had already drawn in His description of Him. He had before spoken of Him as the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, and now He adds that He is the Holy Ghost. This adds somewhat to the revelation, inasmuch as it identifies the Paraclete with the Third Divine Person of the Ever-Blessed Trinity. He had before said that He would ask the Father Who would give them another

Paraclete, that is, another like Himself, and now He says that the Father will send Him in His name. For the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son alike, and either of the other Divine Persons is said to send Him. But the sending Him in the name of our Lord implies that He will be sent to do the work which our Lord has begun, to carry on the merciful dispensation of the Incarnation, to perfect the Kingdom of Christ, to be the life and soul of the Church. Moreover, the language here used is such as to imply the love which the Blessed Paraclete will bear towards those whom our Lord had gathered out of the world, and to whom the continuation of His work, under the guidance of the Paraclete Himself, was to be committed. For the Mission of our Lord by His Father is constantly spoken of, in the New Testament, as having sprung out of the love of God for the world, which was so great that He sent His only-begotten Son that all that believed in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. That being so, the Mission of the Paraclete cannot be supposed to be in any way inferior to, or different in motive from, that of the only-begotten Son as a manifestation of the love of God for the world. The Three Divine Persons are One in substance and will and power and wisdom, and it cannot be but that the love we have experienced from the Father and the Son will be the principle of the Mission of the Paraclete to us, and that He is sent to us in our Lord's name implies that He is come to carry out and perfect the work which is peculiarly the work of our Lord made Man, that is, the work of our salvation.

One special office of the Paraclete is that He is to teach them all truth, and to bring to their

remembrance all things whatsoever our Lord shall have said to them. The Holy Ghost was not to come in visible form, or to manifest Himself in human words or actions, but to teach through the inspirations which He would breathe into their hearts, whether individually or as the general body. It is not said that He will teach them nothing at all new, that is, nothing of which our Lord had never spoken, whether implicitly or explicitly. It is seemingly implied that He may reveal things of which our Lord had said nothing, but that His teaching would be mainly by way of bringing out the full and rich meaning of what had been said by our Lord, which they had not taken in, at the time when He had said it.

An example will show the meaning of this more clearly. There can be no doubt that our Lord gave many hints in the course of His teaching that the Gentiles were to be made heirs of the Kingdom and the Jews rejected. He spoke of many coming from the East and the West, and sitting down with the Patriarchs in the Kingdom, and of the children of the Kingdom being cast out in the exterior darkness, of the other sheep that He had who were not of that fold, and of the making ultimately one fold and one Shepherd. Yet this great truth was to be brought out by the Holy Ghost. Let us turn to St. Paul, and listen to his words on the same subject, 'That you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men as it is now revealed to His Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and co-partners of His promise in Christ Jesus by the Gospel.' . . .

And then he speaks of his own vocation as the preacher to the Gentiles . . . 'to enlighten all men, that they may see what is the dispensation of the mystery which hath been hidden from all eternity in God, Who created all things, that the manifold wisdom of God may be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places by the Church.'

It cannot be said that our Lord had not foretold the vocation of the Gentiles. He had foretold also that other part on which St. Paul does not dwell—that they were not only to be 'fellow-heirs' with the Jews, but were to take their place as God's people. But the illumination of the Apostles and Prophets, of which St. Paul speaks, was the work of the Holy Ghost, an illumination as to the hidden secrets of God which extended not only to all men, but to the blessed spirits in Heaven. We may remember how St. Peter, speaking of the way in which our Lord's 'sufferings, and the glories that were to follow' had been revealed to the old Prophets without their having a full knowledge of their meaning, says that those things were now revealed 'by them that preached the Gospel to you, the Holy Ghost being sent down from Heaven, on Whom the angels desire to look.'² That is, as it seems, the revelation of God's ways and works through our Lord, which is made by the Holy Ghost upon earth, is a matter which excites the eager desire for more and more knowledge in the blessed angels themselves.

In this counsel of God, then, of the vocation of the Gentiles, we have an instance of a truth which was certainly mentioned by our Lord Himself, as well as foretold in earlier prophecies, and was set

¹ Ephes. iii. 6, seq.

² 1 St. Peter i. 12.

forth by the Holy Ghost, after the Day of Pentecost, with a splendour and magnificence which astonished even the angels. It did not take full possession of the mind of the Church till the time came for it to be accomplished, and it was the teaching of the Holy Ghost which guided her, as we see in the Council of Jerusalem, to the practical conclusions which it involved as to the Old Law. We have instances of similar enlightenment mentioned by the Evangelists, as when St. John tells us of the answer made by our Lord to the question about His authority, on the first occasion on which He cleansed the Temple. 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up,' speaking of His Body. 'When, therefore, He was risen again from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed the Scripture, and the word that Jesus had said.'³

It is possible that our Lord used the expression about the calling to remembrance whatever He had said, out of a particularly refined and tender care for the Apostles in their state of alarm at His departure. It might have occurred to them that there never had been or could be a time when they could less afford to lose His guidance and the light which He habitually shed upon all sacred things, than the present, when they had just received from Him so precious and wonderful promises concerning gifts and powers which they could hardly grasp perfectly. They never were more likely to want His assistance, that they might be able to rise to the height of what was held out to them. So He may have meant to assure them that, in this also, the Paraclete would take His place in leading them on to the fuller intelligence of the mighty gifts which

³ St. John ii. 22 ; see also xii. 16.

were thus to be placed at their disposal. In this case the words may have a special reference to the promises just received, which the Paraclete would have the office of explaining to them with all the fulness which they might have looked for from our Lord Himself. Or the words before us may be general in their reference to the whole teaching of our Lord during His stay on earth.

We are able to trace—and it is one of the most fruitful studies which rewards the thoughtful and prayerful reader of the New Testament—something which seems to belong to this office of the Paraclete, in the comparison of many passages in the Epistles generally and in the rest of the Sacred Volume, with the oral teaching of our Lord as preserved to us in the Gospels. To a certain extent, though not entirely, the teaching of the Apostles under the illuminating and guiding influence of the Holy Ghost, is preserved to us in that which may be called the later half of the New Testament. Our Lord's words are seldom actually quoted, but it is clear to the devout soul that His teaching is the foundation of all that we read, and underlies the whole fabric of the Apostolic doctrine. It is not hard to see in this development of His words and acts and thoughts, an illustration of the beautiful manner in which this office of the Holy Ghost, the 'bringing to mind' to the Apostles whatever He had said to them, was discharged by the Paraclete in the first year of the Church. Single sentences and words of our Lord grow into whole systems and ramifications of doctrine in the Epistles. It is perfectly true, as has more than once been hinted in these pages, that with regard to certain subjects, such as the organization of the Church as a Kingdom and a Society, the Sacramental system,

and perhaps some others, we cannot be certain that there were no more words spoken concerning them by our Lord Himself to the Apostles than the few that are preserved in the Gospels. For those were matters which were important for the very foundation of the Church, and at the same time they were committed to her guardianship and authority in a special manner, so that it might have been necessary that our Lord should Himself legislate on them. The Gospels and Acts and Epistles do not mention them, but rather take them for granted. It is probable in the very highest degree that there was therefore a great amount of teaching of our Lord on certain subjects which was not committed to the written Word of God.

But, on the other hand, we must also remember that the Day of Pentecost was the dawn of a new creation of heavenly truth, and although we are told that our Lord before the Ascension opened the intelligence of the Apostles to understand the treasures of Holy Scriptures, still as a general rule the coming of the Holy Ghost, the sending of Him from Heaven, of which St. Peter speaks in the passage lately quoted, made the hearts and minds of Christians generally far more enlightened to understand the things of God than they had been before He was given, that is, before the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension. It is therefore likely that what our Lord taught even the Apostles before the accomplishment of His great Sacrifice, was comparatively in a simple and rudimentary way, such as that of which we have specimens in the teachings of this most gracious evening of Holy Thursday, short and simple and most pregnant instructions, which were sufficient for the time, and which contained in themselves germs which

admitted of indefinite and most fruitful expansion under the guidance and fostering nurture of the Holy Ghost.

The doctrine, for instance, concerning this Divine Paraclete Himself, as it is drawn out by St. Paul, especially those portions of it which relate to His gifts and fruits and working in the Church generally, is an instance, which will occur to the student, of the great richness and luxuriance of Christian truth under His hand, and so again that of the Priesthood and Sacrifice of our Lord. These must all have been founded on a comparatively few words of our Lord Himself, and they furnish us with a most marvellous instance indeed of the growth and fertility of His words and the mighty truths wrapped up therein. St. Paul himself never listened to any words that fell from the mouth of our Divine Saviour until He appeared to him after casting him to the ground on the road to Damascus. Yet there can be supposed no one among the Apostles who was more perfectly penetrated, and more fully possessed, by what He calls the 'mind of Christ,' than he. And the promise here made is not to be limited in time to the first century, any more than it is to be limited to those who had the blessing of hearing our Lord Himself teach. The gift of the Holy Ghost is made once for all to the Church, which lives by Him and is His channel and organ to the world, always in every age witnessing to the truth, because He is in her and with her. But we must not now spend more of our space on this single promise. It is enough to be assured that the boon spoken of in this gracious promise, and explained further in the other passages on the same subject in later parts of this same precious discourse of our Lord, is ever living in

its freshness and magnificence. Indeed, the whole history of the manner in which the doctrinal and devotional system of the Catholic Church has grown in successive ages, according to the needs of her children and the opposition with which she has been met by the world and its rulers, is a long tale in which the heavenly powers have taken delight, as they rejoiced to learn from her a mystery such as that of the vocation of the Gentiles.

Our Lord goes on to speak of the ineffable boon of peace, and here again He uses, as has been said, the language of One Who is taking His leave of His friends. The boon here spoken of is not promised, but it is already given. 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, do I give unto you.' Peace became the usual salutation for the Apostles to use to those to whom they wrote. 'Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ,' and we find the same prayer frequently as the parting wish when their Epistles draw to their close. 'The peace of God which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus,' says St. Paul to the Philippians. This peace is described in very few words by Toletus in this passage. He says it comprises in the first place friendship with God, then tranquillity of mind, and calm serenity in temptations and persecutions; and lastly, peace and concord among themselves, which makes one brave in every danger and supplies them with consolation under every trouble. Friendship with God implies that as far as we know ourselves, our consciences do not reproach us with any unrepented and unforgiven sin, or anything that may come between us and God in the childlike confidence and de-

pendence with which we cling to Him. This is what St. John speaks of as having 'confidence' or 'boldness' towards God. This is the rejoicing or glory which St. Paul speaks of when he says that his 'glory is this, the testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity of heart and sincerity of God, and not in carnal wisdom, but in the grace of God, we have conversed in this world.'⁴ The Kingdom of God is 'justice and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost,' he says in another place.⁵

The external troubles of the world, of which the Apostles were to have their full share in the providential course of their work for God, cannot disturb those who are the friends of God, and who see His hand in everything. The Apostle says that he and his brethren rejoice 'in the hope of the glory of the sons of God, and not only so, but also in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience trial, and trial hope, and hope confoundeth not, because the charity of God is poured abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Who is given to us.'⁶ And lastly, peace implies mutual harmony and concord, without which the Blessed Body of Christ, the Church, would differ little from the false communities which lie all around her in the world, having fallen off from her unity from various causes, and carrying with them, in their separation, the invariable brand of internal dissension, not only of hearts, but of minds also, not only the discord of angry passions, but the very mark of Satan in divisions about the faith and the truth of God. This union of mind can only be preserved by obedience and submission of the intellect,

⁴ 1 St. John iii. 20; 2 Cor. i. 12.

⁵ Rom. xiv. 17.

⁶ Rom. v. 3—5.

and as soon as men emancipate themselves therefrom, peace is lost.

This peace, then, our Lord leaves behind Him to the Apostles, for He leaves them, however weak, yet pure and holy and innocent and united in Him. He calls it His peace, for it is the very boon which He came into the world to bring with Him and establish in His Kingdom, as the Angels sang at His Nativity, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of the good will.' He gives it, He says, not as the world gives. For the world can only give external and temporal peace, which is not true peace, which does not really either unite men one with another, or make us at peace with ourselves, nor such as it is, is it interior and permanent. But our Lord gives what it is His own to give, true, solid, heavenly, lasting, joy and peace which come from the Holy Ghost and are an anticipation of Heaven. He speaks again of this gift of peace later on in this discourse, when we may speak of it again. And it is to be remembered that when He spoke the words before us He was just about to give them the great source of peace, the boon which conveys it and secures it to us, the boon which He leaves for ever with us, the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

'Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.' There was nothing in what our Lord had said in the preceding words to cause trouble or fear. But the Apostles were in a state of consternation at the thought that they were soon to be parted from Him, and seem to have thought of little else, notwithstanding the great pains which He was taking to console and fortify them. The mere mention of His going away was enough to renew their alarm, yet our Lord, Who knew our human weakness

perfectly, could see that, although not all that He said was perfectly understood by them, and not all the topics of consolation which He suggested could have their full effect, still there was much to be gained, with souls so good and simple and humble, by the promises and assurance which He was giving. So He continued His work of comforter. 'You have heard that I said to you, I go away and come again to you.' There was to be another separation after the Resurrection, for He was soon to ascend into Heaven, and return no more to be with them until the end of the world. But He does not speak now of that, for when that came, they would be immensely stronger in every way, and no longer in need of the extremely tender treatment which He now used.

I have told you, our Lord now says, that I am going away, soon to return. 'If you loved Me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.' He does not mean that they do not love Him, because they do not rejoice at His departure. But He uses a common form of speech, which simply signifies that their love for Him ought to make them glad for His sake, for He would be greatly the gainer in glory and power by His going to the Father. But they thought only of their own fondness for His presence, and that made them set aside the consideration of the gain that would accrue to Him, and dwell only on their own immediate loss by His absence. To love is to wish well to the person who is loved, and therefore the love of the Apostles for our Lord would naturally lead them to rejoice in His exaltation and glory and triumph. The time was coming for His going away, and this meant the end of the period of His humilia-

tion, suffering, of the 'emptying of Himself' of which St. Paul speaks, which had been decreed because He came in the likeness of man, and as sinful man, to atone by His Sacrifice for the sins of the world. This was but for a time; and after that, as the same Apostle says, and because of His humiliation, God was to exalt Him, and give Him a name which is above every name, 'that in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those that are in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue is to confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father.'⁷ This exaltation is attributed to God the Father, to Whom by His Passion and Death, our Lord was now to go. He does not speak of His glory at all at length, He simply says that He goes to His Father, nor does He anywhere in the Gospels describe it in detail. It is the part of the Father to exalt Him because He has humbled Himself, and glorified His Father by His obedience, even unto the death of the Cross, but as He does not describe His humiliation, so He leaves His exaltation to the Father, Who is greater than He, and therefore able to exalt Him.

These words of our Lord, that the Father is greater than He, have, as might be expected, created some controversy, and the Christian Fathers and other writers have given to them various explanations. Many of the most ancient consider that the words are founded on the distinction between the Father and the Son in the Ever-Blessed Trinity, Who are perfectly equal and the same in power, and glory, and majesty, and the possession of the whole Divine Nature, but yet differ in that the Father is the origin of the Son, and that the Son is begotten of the

⁷ Philipp. ii. 10, 11.

Father. The words do not refer to those things in which the Divine Persons are equal, but those in which they are different in this point of origin. On the other hand, there are some who say that the distinction here drawn in no way refers to the Divine Nature, but to the Sacred Humanity, in which our Lord is undoubtedly less than the Father, and the Father greater than He. Some deny that this comparison is here made, because they consider that the distinction between God as Creator and Man as creature is one that cannot be meant here, as it would apply not only to our Lord as Man, but to any one else, or indeed any created being. St. Augustine does not deny that the words may be understood of the Sacred Humanity as inferior to the Father, but he explains the difference in another way, supposing that our Lord speaks of what He was in the opinion of the Apostles, who may have thought our Lord inferior to the Father. We know that the faithful of the Old Testament had not the explicit knowledge about the Three Divine Persons which has become the property of the Church since, and the Apostles may have still shared some of the indistinctness of perception which was common in their time. But Toletus remarks that this interpretation is inconvenient, because our Lord gives His own inferiority to the Father as the reason why the Apostles should have been glad at His going to the Father. He prefers the interpretation of St. Cyril, that our Lord speaks of His Humanity, but refers also to the truth that the Father had no share in His humiliation and the ignominy of His sufferings.⁸

⁸ The reader may be referred, in illustration of the more ancient interpretation of this text, to some most valuable remarks of Cardinal

Our Lord adds, as another reason for their consolation, that He had made His departure an occasion for the confirmation of their faith by predicting it. 'And now I have told you before it come to pass,

Newman on the 'Principatus of the Father,' as taught by the Church both before and after the Arian controversy (*Tracts, Theological and Ecclesiastical*. II. *Causes of the Rise and Successes of Arianism*, § 51. London: Pickering, 1874). Cardinal Newman remarks that, 'It is remarkable that the great Fathers of the fourth century, with their full experience of Arianism, nevertheless continue to enunciate it [meaning the doctrine of the *Principatus*]. What Basil and Gregory did, we under the guidance and correction of the Church, may safely do, and if safely, profitably also. There can be no clearer evidence how little the rise of Arianism indisposed them towards the doctrine of the *Principatus*, than their unanimous interpretation of our Lord's words in St. John xiv., "My Father is greater than I," of our Lord's Divine Nature. These words, from their context, would certainly seem to be spoken of His Humanity. He says, "If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go to the Father, for My Father is greater than I." In His Divine Nature He was not "going" to Him, but as Man, therefore the Father's superiority to Him must be as Man. But in spite of the direct sense of the words, they are interpreted of our Lord's Divinity by almost a *consensus Patrum* in the fourth and fifth centuries, as Petavius enumerates, by Alexander and Athanasius, Basil and Gregory, Chrysostom, Cyril, and John of Damascus among the Greeks, and by Hilary, Augustine, and others among the Latins, though some of them, especially Augustine, interpret them also of our Lord's Human Nature' (pp. 129, 130).

It certainly seems natural to understand our Lord's words of Him, as the going to the Father was to be a gain and a glory to Him, for He says, 'If you loved Me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I,' and therefore able to exalt and glorify Me—as He said on the departure of Judas, which was a first step to the actual execution of the Passion, 'Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God also will glorify Him in Himself, and immediately He will glorify Him.' The same thought seems to be expressed by St. Peter in his speech on the Day of Pentecost, after mentioning His Resurrection. 'Being exalted therefore by the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath poured forth this which you see and hear,' meaning the wonders of which the crowds were witness on the Day of Pentecost. Our Lord may allude to this glorification as a cause of joy for His friends, though it was all for the benefit of mankind as well as for the honour of His Sacred Humanity.

that when it shall come to pass, you may believe.' It seems to be much in the same way that He had spoken of the great signs and wonders which were to be done by the false Christs and false prophets, so as to deceive (if possible) even the elect. 'Behold, I have foretold you all things, I have told it you beforehand.' For the memory of the prediction of all these things by our Lord would certainly strengthen the faith of the believers under afflictions and, in particular, under the apparent helplessness of the Passion. The powers of evil would seem to prevail, and yet all their apparent success having been predicted, would make it more easy to believe whatever else He had predicted, and generally, whatever He had said.

The close of this part of the discourse gives the reason why our Lord does not immediately add more. Our Lord says two things, which must not be confounded together. One is, that the hour is at hand for the great onslaught upon Him of Satan, whom He calls 'the prince of this world,' because the world has become the kingdom of Satan, not legitimately, but by usurpation permitted by God as a punishment of the sins of mankind. It has become a kingdom in which the maxims and rules and principles of the Evil One are allowed to dominate, because it is, in truth, a great system of life which is the result of the workings of human passion and human opinion concerning what is good and bad, a belief which is founded on the falsehood, that only visible and tangible and temporal goods are the real goods, that man is his own master, that the voice of conscience is a false appeal to an authority which does not exist, and that no retribution or judgment awaits me after this life. These maxims are the

product of the working together of the minds of unregenerate and perverted mankind, from whose hearts the good seed of the natural law and the primitive traditions of the race have been stolen away by Satan, who has led the wanderings of human intelligence into still darker and more abominable paths of his own invention.

Satan, then, the prince of this world, is about to make that grand assault, with all his forces, upon our Blessed Lord, of which the Passion is the external history. He has arranged all his plans, and is to be allowed, in the Providence of God, to put forth his whole strength, that his attempt to destroy our Lord may issue in the redemption of the world. Our Lord says that 'the prince of this world cometh, and in Me he hath not anything;' that is, it appears, he finds nothing in Me either of weakness or of fault or sin, which may give him, as it were, a right over Me to deal with Me as he does with those on whom he is allowed to vent his malice. For Satan is spoken of in Scripture as having the power or the empire of death, to which men were made subject by God's decree in punishment for sin, original and actual. But Satan had no right whatever to bring our Lord to death, because our Lord had not, and could not have, anything worthy of death in Him. When, therefore, Satan brought about our Lord's death, he misused even the usurped power which he had obtained by the decree of God against sin, and in consequence of his having strained his power beyond the use for which it had been permitted, he forfeited the power even against those who were guilty of sin. Through death it was appointed, as St. Paul says, that our Lord might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to

say, the devil, and might deliver those who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.⁹

The second thing which our Lord here adds, is the explanation which is to be given of His own action in submitting to the Passion, and in doing all that He was to do therein. 'But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, so do I.' For the whole Passion, on which our Lord was now about to enter, was enjoined on Him by the precept of the Father, not only in general, but as to each particular action and suffering therein. Our Lord's motive in doing and suffering it all was that which He now assigns, the love which He bore to His Father, which had made Him welcome, even when He was in the womb of His Mother, the precept of dying for the sins of the world. Then as He says, 'In the head of the book it is written of Me that I should do Thy will, O God.'¹⁰ St. Paul says that this oblation was made when He came into the world. We know from our Lord's Prayer in the Garden that He allowed His Human Nature to shrink back from the full chalice as it was presented to Him, but that nevertheless He conquered the shrinking by the thought of this precept, praying, 'If this chalice may not pass from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done.' The only question that can be raised about these words is to what precisely they refer as being done in obedience to the command of the Father, whether what is thus done is the whole Passion and Death generally, or whether the words designate any special action of our Lord's in particular.

The precept which our Lord received for the sal-

⁹ Heb. ii. 15.

¹⁰ Heb. x. 7.

vation of the world may be considered in itself, as the Sacrifice of Himself on the Cross as the atonement for human sin, or as including what was to be the result and fruit of that Sacrifice, in all its circumstances, and in all that was determined as to the application of the merits of the Precious Blood then shed to the benefit of the souls of men. And if the Divine Counsels included all that was to flow from our Lord's Sacrifice in the practical application thereof, which had to be decreed by the wisdom of God, in the Kingdom of the Incarnation, the accomplishment of each successive step in the carrying out of that Sacrifice is to be considered as an act of obedience to the Father and an act of love to Him manifested to the world, as well as also the institution of any sacrament or ordinance or means of grace which had been determined upon, as a great weapon throughout all ages in the Church for the glory of God or the salvation or perfection of men. We have seen how our Lord rejoiced over the departure of Judas, when it took place, for that was a step forward in the execution of the precept of which our Lord here speaks. Much more may the same language be used of the institution of the sacraments, especially of the Adorable Sacrifice of the Altar. We shall see presently that our Lord was now about to pause in His instructions to His Apostles, for the purpose of carrying out in that simple and royal way which was customary to Him, the introduction of that great gift of which He had just said, in covert and enigmatical language, that He would not leave them orphans, but would come to them. This we may consider to have been the reason why He spoke these words about showing His love to the Father, so as the world might see

it, and about executing the precept which His Father had given Him. Not, of course, that the words do not apply to the general precept of working the salvation of the world by His Sacrifice, but that at the moment, the determined action towards the obedience to His Father was the particular work of which we speak. The words seem to point to something in His mind as to be immediately undertaken, for they are followed by the other words, 'Arise, let us go hence.' It may be worth while in the next chapter to spend a few pages in the consideration of this question, which, perhaps, needs more attention than it has usually received from commentators on St. John.

CHAPTER X.

The Institution of the Blessed Sacrament.

St. Matt. xxvi. 26—29 ; St. Mark xiv. 22—25 ; St. Luke xxii. 19, 20 ;
Story of the Gospels, § 155.

WE have just said that the reader can hardly fail to be struck by the occurrence of a few words in this place, in which St. John seems to hint at some change of place on the part of our Lord and the company of the Apostles. For after the last words on which we have been dwelling, he tells us that our Lord continued, 'Arise, let us go hence.' What makes the occurrence of these words still more striking is that there is no mention in the narrative as it proceeds of any change of place which followed on their utterance. The next words in the text of St. John are apparently a continuation of the preceding discourse, 'I am the true Vine,' and the rest ; but though there is no break in the onward flow of the discourse, it is clear that the subject-matter of our Lord's words is entirely changed. Certainly, even without the break which is implied by the words about 'going hence,' and if these words did not exist in the narrative of the Evangelist, we should be inclined to think that there was a change in the subject. Our Lord has evidently been speaking, in the words with which our last chapter closed, in a manner which conveys the idea that, for the present, He had finished the matter of which He had been

speaking. He had said that, in order that the world might know that He loved the Father, He was about to do certain things. Those words had been preceded by others, in which He had said that He was not about to speak many things with the Apostles, for the Prince of this world was coming, and was to find nothing in Him. These words certainly imply a cessation of the discourse which our Lord had been holding with His Apostles up to that point, in order that He might do something which would be a proof to the world that He loved the Father, and which were to be a fulfilment and performance of something which the Father had given Him a commandment to do. We are thus prepared for something new. And as we have said, when St. John goes on, as is the case immediately after the words of which we are speaking, to subjoin other words, and indeed a long discourse, the subject is to some extent new and disconnected from what has been said before. We are thus led to suppose a break of continuity at the point which we have now reached, not only by what immediately precedes the words before us, but also by what immediately follows them. We shall see presently whether the words which follow what we may suppose to be the break of which we are speaking can be connected with any other words of our Lord related at this time by the Evangelists. If this can be shown to be the case, we have another intimation which may be of great value to us in arranging the context.

What would be still more satisfactory would be to find, on investigation, that there has been something hitherto omitted in the arrangement, and omitted for good reasons, which may seem to fill up very naturally and beautifully the gap thus left in the narrative

of St. John, appearing to flow on well from the former part of that narrative, and to illustrate that which follows, and this without doing any violence to the statements of any of the Evangelists. There is a certain abruptness and apparent want of connection, if the text before us be left without some easy and obvious explanation, and this seems to be suggested by the very phenomena which attract our attention. We shall see if any such explanation of the difficulty before us can thus be found.

The words of which we speak have not only no connection with anything that precedes them or that follows them, but they create a difficulty which requires to be explained by any serious student of the Gospel narrative. The words seem to justify the inference that our Lord at the point before us proposed to, or ordered, His companions, that they should then and there leave the place at which the discourse which is related in the previous verses was delivered. If St. John had terminated his account of the proceedings of this evening with these words, we should most certainly have understood that he meant us to suppose that our Lord had ended His address, and that the whole company then and there left the Cenacle. And then, if there had been no other accounts remaining to us of any sayings or doings in the Cenacle, we might have concluded that the 'hymn,' of which the other Evangelists tell us, was now sung, that is, as it seems, the great Hallel, with which the Paschal supper was usually terminated, and that our Lord proceeded with his disciples to the Garden of Gethsemani. Yet this is in apparent contradiction to the text of St. John. For the Evangelist at once continues his history of the evening in the Cenacle, for as much as three chapters of our

New Testament, and, as it need hardly be said, these chapters contain a narrative of words of our Blessed Saviour full of the most inestimable treasures of spiritual love. They conclude with that which may without exaggeration be called a perfectly unique revelation of His Sacred Heart, the long prayer to His Father for the Church, which He poured forth in the hearing of His disciples, which is in one sense the most precious of all the documents which the Beloved Disciple has preserved for us.

But it is clear, in the first place, that we should create for ourselves a perfectly unnecessary difficulty if we were to take it for granted that when our Lord said the words before about departing hence, He meant to speak of that final leaving of the Cenacle of which not only the other Evangelists, but St. John himself later on, speak, when they relate the going forth from the Cenacle to the Garden of Gethsemani, when all that was to be said or done there had been accomplished. In that supposition we have either to suppose that our Lord gave this order and afterwards delayed its fulfilment, so that the words were utterly nugatory. We might fairly ask those who think that such a speech of our Lord was possible, why the Evangelist was guided by the Holy Ghost to record the words, and then practically to record their non-fulfilment? If our Lord changed His mind and delayed His departure, why was the order left recorded in the sacred history?

There are, as might be easily supposed, only a certain possible number of conjectures to explain this very gratuitous difficulty, and they each one seem to have been adopted by some among those who have written on the subject. We dismiss the opinion, if it has really any followers, that our Lord

changed His mind, and that the order which He had given to go to another place was not executed at the time, though it is obviously recorded by St. John, who must be supposed to have had a purpose of his own for so recording it, as well as our Lord for giving it. The contrary opinion has no difficulty—that our Lord at this point did actually change the scene of the incidents which followed, to another part of the Cenacle. This is intelligible enough. Another opinion is that He got up and began the departure to the Garden of Gethsemani, and that the rest of the long discourse, which St. John subjoins, that is, as we have said, the contents of three whole chapters of his Gospel, was uttered by our Lord as the company of the Apostles was passing through the streets and along the road outside the walls on the way to the Garden. Another opinion, again, is that our Lord lingered, as ‘people do who are loth to part from friends,’ and to go to a place where some trouble awaits them, and that a part of the discourse and the Prayer to His Father, which follow in St. John, was uttered as the Apostles were standing about the door or preparing for their departure, without any very definite purpose or distinct occupation. If we are not mistaken, these last conjectures will hardly approve themselves to any student who remembers what the occasion is with which we are dealing, and asks himself seriously whether our Lord was likely to utter language so full of the most sublime peace and the most intense affection to us and reverence to God, in the streets at night, when it must have been very difficult for the eleven Apostles to keep close to Him so as to hear His words, and when there may have been many persons passing along besides themselves. Such

a conjecture has no shadow of foundation in the Gospels, and it supposes that our Lord, under such circumstances as we are told by St. John, paused at the end, and 'lifted up His eyes to heaven' in order to pour forth that most solemn and Divine prayer to His Father for the Unity of the Church with which these chapters close.

Whatever may be thought of these conjectures, it must be remembered that we have the authority of St. John for the fact, which seems conclusive enough as to the place in which the Divine words recorded in these three chapters were uttered, that 'When Jesus had said these things'—the words immediately preceding being the Prayer to His Father, of which we have just spoken—'He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where there was a Garden'—and what follows. This is a point as to which a study of the harmony would have saved a good many perplexities. The truth is, that in the abruptness and consequent difficulty about these few words, 'Arise, let us go hence,' and their apparent disconnection from anything that follows, we have only a fresh instance of the manner ordinary to St. John. Instead of creating for us a difficulty, his words probably are meant by him to give us a clue as to the right order of the incidents of the evening. We have already said more than once that it is the rule which St. John follows in this narrative to omit the incidents which have been already mentioned by the other Evangelists. It is inevitable for a writer who composes a narrative of many incidents on this principle, that in his own mind the narrative, as it comes from his pen, must be broken by gaps at the places where the incidents which he omits took place. These gaps are not marked in the text confessedly,

but they must be perfectly present to the author, as well as to any one who knows the whole story; and the author may even insert remarks, like the words before us, which are only intelligible to those who know what he has passed over or intends to omit. Sometimes he may interpose these remarks in the story for the express purpose of warning his readers that there is a gap to be filled up, although it does not suit him to say how.

We believe the words before us to be a hint of this kind. They are meant by St. John to tell us that at this point a change actually did take place in the scene of the evening, that our Lord and His Apostles did actually do as He proposed to them to do, and went to another place, and that between the words in which our Lord enjoined on them 'to depart hence' and the words which follow next in St. John's text something did take place, for which it was convenient for them to change the room in which they had hitherto been assembled for another. It is equally natural to suppose that, when the object of the change had been effected, and the incident had passed which St. John omits, our Lord proceeded with the discourse that follows, speaking of a new subject, connected with what had passed in the meantime. What that subject was we know—the doctrine of the vine and the branches. St. John, therefore, need not be supposed to have inserted one superfluous word of our Lord's utterance, nor to contradict himself by implying that our Lord proposed to leave the place in which He was without really leaving it. Nor is there any need at all for the conjectures as to the discourses continued in the narrow and dark streets of Jerusalem, which seem to present so many inconveniences. We have only to

suppose that St. John's narrative is absolutely accurate in this as in all other points, though he is so careful not to tell what has been already told. This is another instance in which not only is a difficulty avoided, but an addition to our knowledge is gained, by simply taking the words of an Evangelist to mean what they naturally mean, and imply what they seem to imply. We ought to have some strong reason to induce us to think the contrary. We therefore conclude that at this point of St. John's narrative our Lord, for some good reason, wished to change the room in which He had hitherto been in the Cenacle for another, that He expressed His wish, and that His wish was, as a matter of course, complied with by His companions.

This simple and easy solution of the apparent difficulty would probably approve itself at once to most students, if it were not that the following words in St. John seem to be the continuation of the discourse which the words before us have interrupted. But as has been said, here again we may be creating difficulties for ourselves. It is St. John himself who tells us that the discourse was continued, having also informed us that our Lord said, 'Let us go hence,' before He continued it. What is the difficulty of taking St. John's words in their plain sense? He does not tell us, indeed, directly that the company now had moved from one apartment into another, for he had sufficiently told us that already, by mentioning our Lord's injunction that they should do so. He is in all this narrative of the discourse almost exclusively occupied in relating our Lord's words, and he mentions no actions of His except what was necessary for the intelligence of these words. If he had begun to say what passed before the resumption of the

discourse, he would probably have had to mention something which he did not wish to mention, as we shall presently see. Unless he was going to mention more than that the disciples obeyed our Lord, and what followed thereon, it would have been superfluous indeed to have mentioned that fact and nothing else. We are, therefore, here led to insert one of the incidents of the evening which St. John could not mention, for the rule which we have more than once spoken of, namely, because it was something the other Evangelists had mentioned before him.

The reader who has followed us hitherto in the present volume will be perfectly prepared to be reminded that up to the present point we have not mentioned the greatest of all the acts of this evening, that is, the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. He will also be aware generally of the reasons which have made us conclude against the insertion of the institution at an earlier stage of the proceedings of the evening. There is some difficulty about fixing on any place which is perfectly free from the possibility of doubt, on account of the combination of two causes of uncertainty. The first of these is the extremely summary way in which the earlier Evangelists have passed over the whole story, including, of course, all that St. John has told us. We find almost nothing in St. Matthew or St. Mark to insert, because they mention nothing except the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. St. Luke's few additions are without any connection which give us a certain clue to guide us. The other cause of uncertainty is the fact already mentioned, that St. John avoids any record of what the others have related, except when he has been obliged, as it were, to mention it for the

sake of completing it by some fresh and important information. It will strike us frequently, unless we are mistaken, when we come to compare the narrative of the Passion in St. John with the same story in the other Evangelists, how almost exclusively the former is made up of large fragments which are meant to be inserted in the history as it stood before him, and how slight are the notes of warning furnished us by St. John when he has finished with one of these fragments and passes to another. St. John's method is the same all through his Gospel, which is the most easy of all the four to arrange, when his method is understood, and the one of the four which presents most difficulty of arrangement when this is not understood.

We consider therefore that the truth about these few words here inserted by St. John is that he is at this point giving us a silent warning that it was now, and neither later nor earlier in the evening, that a break occurred, not only, as has been seen in the last chapter, in the onward flow of our Lord's words of consolation and exhortation to the disciples, but that more than that, He passed, as His last word expressly intimated that He was about to pass, from simple encouragement, instruction, and promise, to mighty acts of power and love. 'That the world may know that I love the Father, and as My Father hath given Me commandment, so do I.' He does not say, so say I, or so promise I, but so do I, and it may be remarked that when He says, I 'do,' He uses the word which He used when after the institution of the Blessed Eucharist He said, as St. Luke and St. Paul tell us, 'Do this in remembrance or commemoration of Me,' although these words will not be recognized by all as having the special liturgical

meaning which we ourselves may be inclined to give them. At all events, what has been said about the passage from words to deeds is intelligible to all. Thus we can see no reason in the Sacred Text, or in what it tells us of the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, why we should not follow the hint which we suppose to be here conveyed, that this is the place in which we are to insert what must be inserted somewhere in this long narrative of St. John, the great central mystery of which we are speaking. We will add at once a few considerations in support of this view of the facts drawn from the context, as we suppose it to be, in which the narrative of the institution thus finds itself. It is some argument when we have to suppose a break in such a narrative, and have to suppose also that it followed after one thing elsewhere related, and was followed by another thing likewise elsewhere related, that we should find that in neither case will there be any abruptness or want of congruity in the context.

We may first speak of what has preceded the narrative of the institution if it is to be placed where it will thus be placed. Almost enough, however, has been already said on this point. We have been engaged in following our Blessed Lord through a set of short, pregnant, and most loving exhortations and promises, including the chief distinctive Divine gifts of which the Apostles and the Church were to be the recipients after His departure to the Father. We have seen that this chain of promises, all tending to furnish great sources of consolation, seems to come to a natural climax just before the point which we have reached. Our Lord has distinctly declared His intention of not saying much more on the same class of subjects, on account of the near approach of

the time when He is to be exposed to a great assault from the powerful enemy of God and man, the prince of this world, Satan. But He has something to do, as has been said. This is to testify to His love for the Father, and it is not easy to imagine anything that is yet to be done by Him before the Passion itself, if the Blessed Sacrament had not yet been instituted, but that institution. It would answer perfectly the description given by our Lord of that which He is now to do. To the Church now it is the memorial of the Passion, to His own Sacred Heart before the Passion took place it was the summary of the same. We cannot peer into the secrets and counsels of that Sacred Heart, but we can hardly imagine any more pleasing sacrifice to the Eternal Father imposed upon It at this particular time, than that He should be glorified by the first offering of the most Holy Eucharist, which God is said to have made the memorial of all His mighty and wonderful works. If we have rightly understood the great promises of our Lord of which He has lately been speaking, it seems as if this might have been a fitting and most loving sequel to them, passing from words to deeds, and from promises to the gifts themselves. Nor could there have been, we may think, any act of our Lord at this time more full of strengthening, enlightening, and encouraging power to the beloved Apostles whom He was preparing so tenderly for separation from Himself for a time, than the institution of this sacred Banquet, in which as the Church sings, 'The mind is filled with grace, and the pledge of future glory is given to us.' And if our considerations on the order of the incidents of this evening are correct, this most Blessed Sacrament had not yet been given, though Its promise had been

renewed in the gracious words which our Lord had spoken, saying that He Himself would not leave them orphans, but would come to them—words which seem also to imply that He had not yet given Himself to them in this Divine manner.

Later on, as we shall see, in His Prayer to the Father, with which the utterances in the Cenacle close, He is thought to make special mention of this great gift as having been conferred on them, which He says that He has given to them, in order that they may be one, ‘the glory which His Father has given to Him.’ This explanation of the words come to us from St. Cyril of Alexandria, and it seems worthy of so great a theologian. If it be the case that our Lord then spoke of the Blessed Sacrament, it may show that the thought of this great gift filled a place in His mind at this time which makes Its institution an action not unfitted for so solemn an occasion as that of which we are now speaking. This much may be said as to the fitness of the insertion of the history in this place.

There will be found to be an equal, if not a still greater fitness in the context which follows on the narrative of the institution, if this be the place in which it is to be inserted in the narrative of St. John. For the first words of the discourse which now follow in the Gospel of St. John are those words of our Lord, ‘I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman.’ We have already remarked how entirely the image contained in, and the thoughts suggested by these words, are disconnected from those which immediately precede them in the Sacred Text. Our Lord here passes to a new subject, as will be seen when we come to consider the words more closely. That subject is the necessity of the

closest unity, first, between Him as the Vine and Christians as the branches, and then, as a necessary consequence of that, between the several 'branches' among themselves. This is a new topic with our Lord. He has not before, in any words that we know of, dwelt upon the great doctrine of unity in this way. Now we find several reasons why this should naturally follow on the incident which we suppose to have taken place in the interval of time of which we are speaking, that is, the time between the command which He gave the Apostles, as St. John informs us, to pass to another place from that in which the former discourse was held, and the words which we are now discussing, in which He speaks of Himself parabolically as the Vine, which His Father prunes, and His disciples as the branches.

In the first place, the image of the vine is naturally suggested by the chalice which He had just before then—if our supposition be right—consecrated and given to His Apostles to drink. The image would have been suggested by the simple action of our Lord. But there is something more. St. Matthew and St. Mark tell us that after giving them the chalice of His own most Precious Blood, He used the remarkable words about His not drinking any more of the fruit of the vine until the day in which He would drink it new with them in the Kingdom of His Father. We have already expressed our conviction that these words were said by our Blessed Lord at the time at which they are placed by the two first Evangelists, and that it is also true that very similar, though not quite identical, words were used by Him at an earlier stage also in the course of this inquiry, as St. Luke informs us. In both cases they had a special significance which it would be a

great loss to us to miss. In the first instance, of which St. Luke tells us, our Lord was looking forward with joy to the fulfilment of the figures of the Old Law, of which the Paschal cup of wine was one, in the sacraments of the New Law, and especially in the chalice of the Blessed Sacrament. In the second instance, that of which St. Matthew and St. Mark tell us, our Lord was looking forward still further to the Eternal Banquet in Heaven, the Beatific Vision and Possession of God. We have said something of this already, and may add a few words more in the proper place.

It is unnecessary to say how naturally and beautifully these words, with which St. John begins this discourse of our Blessed Lord about His being the true Vine, fit in, if we may so speak, as the sequel to the narratives of St. Matthew and St. Mark of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament Itself. They even seem to carry on the sentence with which the earlier Evangelists end. We have therefore fair reason for thinking that no violence is done to the whole Divine history by this insertion here, and if it were necessary, it would not be difficult to show that the history of the institution cannot be inserted in the supplementary narrative of St. John in any other place with an equal appearance of fitness.

As it will be necessary for us to speak of certain apparent difficulties which meet us in the history as far as it is told us, of the institution of which we are now to give the short details with which the sacred historians furnish us, it will be well once more to remind ourselves of the manner in which that story reaches us from the Evangelists. It has been already said that the Evangelists must be considered as not telling us the same story in the same way, or each

with the same fulness of detail. The extreme brevity of the accounts furnished by St. Matthew and St. Mark give us a right to consider them rather as mentioning the fact that our Lord instituted the Blessed Sacrament on this evening, than as giving us any particulars concerning the institution, while St. Luke does very little more than his two predecessors. We have already said also more than once that St. John does not mention it, even in as few direct words as the others, though we consider him to have incidentally given us a great many facts concerning our Lord's words and acts, both before and after the institution, which throw a great light upon the kind of thoughts which He suggested to the Apostles by way of preparation for it, and also on the frame of mind in which He placed them after the great mystery itself. For if what we have hitherto said be founded on a true intelligence of the actual order of the incidents of this Thursday evening, it is impossible but the account of St. John as far as we have used it, and as we hope hereafter to use it further, should be an opening of the thoughts of the Sacred Heart at this wonderful time, such as nowhere else is to be found even in the Gospels.

Besides St. John and the other Evangelists, we have some very precious words of St. Paul concerning the actions and words of our Lord in his first Epistle to the Corinthian Church,¹ and we shall have no hesitation in comparing these sacred words thus furnished us with the venerable traditions preserved for us in the Canon of the Mass of the Catholic Church. The Canon was probably not committed to writing for a long period after the institution, but

¹ 1 Cor. xi.

it may represent to us the tradition of the Apostolic times, which existed in the Church even earlier than the Gospels themselves. For it is easily conceivable that the Adorable Sacrifice was offered before any Gospel was written, nor is it easy to suppose that those who first offered It in the Church, who must have been those who had been present when our Lord instituted It, could have used any other form than that which He had enjoined on them both by word and example. If an Evangelist was commissioned to relate the institution, his best human authority, supposing he was not one of themselves, would certainly be the Apostles, who might have been celebrating the Holy Sacrifice for years, perhaps, before the occasion came for him to write. Nor is there any likelihood at all in the supposition that the form would have been forgotten, or considered a matter of indifference, whereas it would be, in a history, the chief question when and how the institution was made, rather than the exact accuracy of such a narrative as to the form. This may even have been possibly kept back on purpose, on account of the danger attending its publication. For these reasons we consider the liturgical forms as most likely to be authoritative. We shall take the Canon, as we now have it in the Roman Missal, as substantially representing to us the ancient tradition sufficiently for our purpose, without pausing to point out the verbal additions which we know to have been made in it from time to time.

The first Evangelists, as has been said, mention the fact of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament in the simplest way. The words in which they relate it are, as nearly as possible, identical. The Vulgate translation has made them less identical than they

are in the original Greek, and it has been followed in this by our English Bibles, which do not represent St. Matthew and St. Mark as using exactly the same word to describe the action of the Apostles at the time of the institution. 'Whilst they were at supper,' says St. Mark. 'Whilst they were eating,' says St. Matthew. The word is exactly the same in both cases in the original, and although the importance of the difference is not very great, it may be of some use to have noticed it. They go on. St. Matthew, 'Jesus took bread and gave thanks, and blessing, broke, and gave to His disciples and said, Take ye and eat, this is My Body,' and St. Mark, 'Broke and gave to them and said, Take ye, this is My Body.' So far St. Mark almost word for word follows St. Matthew, as he follows him in the greater part of his Gospel.

This is the account of the first part of the institution in the two first Evangelists, and we might almost consider them as one witness, but that we know the close connection between St. Mark and St. Peter, and have therefore a right to count the latter in as an independent witness, who was present at the institution itself, as confirming the statement of St. Matthew. So, as far as we know, the written accounts of any authority in the Church stood until the time when St. Luke's Gospel was written, mainly perhaps, under the guidance of St. Paul. It is most highly probable that St. Luke wrote with a full and intimate knowledge of the two former Gospels, but even if this very evident fact were questioned (as hardly any fact has been left unquestioned which refers to this subject-matter), it would make no difference to our argument. For the Holy Ghost, Who guided the hand and pen of

St. Luke as of the other Evangelists, must have known exactly what had been selected for insertion in the former Gospels, and what omitted. We shall see the beautiful growth and gradual unfolding of the history in the narrative of St. Luke, few indeed as are the words which he uses, and slight in themselves as his additions may seem to be.

The first thing that strikes us in St. Luke's description of the institution (as far as regards the first part of which we have been speaking), is that he leaves out altogether the mark of time. He does not say, 'Whilst they were eating or supping.' His account follows, in his text, immediately on the words of our Lord in answer to the remark of the Apostles, 'Lord, behold here are two swords! and He said, It is enough.' It would not be well to insist on this as a proof that St. Luke means us to understand that the words about the two swords were immediately followed by the institution, for the incidents recorded by St. Luke on the last evening are so few that there may have been long intervals between them, and, although St. Luke is the one who most usually follows the order of time, we cannot be certain that he does so in this place. But his omission of the mention that it was while supper was going on, is significant, especially when taken in connection with the positive statement which he makes about the consecration of the chalice, of which this Evangelist distinctly says that it was, 'In like manner the chalice also' after supper, or after He had supped. It must remain uncertain whether the 'In like manner' is meant by St. Luke to apply to the statement that He consecrated the chalice as well as the sacred bread, or whether he means us to understand that the conse-

cration of each was in the same way after He had supped.

These, then, appear to be the difficulties suggested by the subsequent account of St. Luke, coming as a commentary on the earliest statements of St. Matthew and St. Mark, a commentary certainly not meant to correct anything that had been said by them, but added with a view of making what they had left ambiguous more definite and perfectly and unmistakeably clear. We may add, before we part with this part of the institution, that there is one significant difference between St. Matthew and both St. Luke and St. Mark, which may perhaps be meant by the first Evangelist to guard against a misconception which was not so likely to occur to the readers of the Gospels of the other two. Where St. Matthew speaks of our Lord taking bread before the consecration and distribution to the Apostles, he seems to have carefully prefixed, to the word bread, the definite article, *the* bread, or *the* loaf, or *the* cake. In this he is singular among the three. It was therefore some particular cake or loaf that was taken by our Lord, not merely bread in the general, which might have been either leavened or unleavened, according to the stage in the feast or supper at which it was taken.

One other point may be noticed here in which St. Luke may be considered as distinctly adding to our knowledge by what he says, over and above the two earlier Evangelists whom he succeeded. He adds after the words of our Lord, 'This is My Body,' the other words, 'which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me.' In this he is supported by St. Paul, whose words are nearly identical, save that the Apostle uses the word 'broken' instead of

‘given.’ The remaining words of St. Luke are the same in the Greek as those of St. Paul. It is natural to think that the object of the Apostle in inserting these words, which must undoubtedly have been spoken by our Lord at the time, though for good reasons they were omitted by St. Matthew and St. Luke, was to introduce into the accounts of the institution of the Blessed Eucharist the doctrine of the Sacrifice which is so clearly expressed by them, whereas from the accounts of St. Matthew and St. Mark taken alone and as complete, the enemies of that most precious doctrine would have been able to say that it had no foundation in the recorded words used by our Lord Himself. So beautifully and so delicately were the writers of the New Testament guided and guarded in their successive statements on this momentous subject. It is natural also that we should find this teaching as to the Sacrifice in the Gospel of St. Luke, which has been considered from the earliest times as having a special character in bringing out the sacrificial and priestly aspect of the Mission of our Blessed Lord.

These are the points which have to be noticed as to the first part of the institution of the Holy Eucharist in the New Testament account. It remains to say a few words as to the second part, which by some writers, who are guided by reason founded on the words of the Gospel themselves, is supposed to have taken place at a later period of the evening than the first part. We shall see presently how far these reasons appear to make it necessary to agree to this opinion. The first two Evangelists are here also side by side, with words almost identical. St. Matthew says, ‘And taking the chalice He gave thanks and gave to them saying,

Drink ye all of this, for this is My Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.' St. Mark has, 'And taking the chalice, giving thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And He said to them, This is My Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many.' The two statements may be considered as identical, though the very slight variation of language in St. Mark serves to show that he is an independent witness and represents to us here again the suffrage of St. Peter. But in the record of St. Luke and St. Paul we find variations again. In the first place both the Apostle and the Evangelist seem to insist on the point of time which we have already mentioned. Each says in identical words, 'In like manner also the chalice after supper,' or after the action of supping, and each, 'saying, This cup is the New Testament in My Blood.' St. Luke adds, 'Which is poured out for you.' And St. Paul adds, 'Do this, as often as you drink it in memory of Me, for the commemoration of Me.' There seems to be but little difference between the later witness of St. Luke and St. Paul, and that of the earlier witness of St. Matthew and St. Mark, although the additions made by the latter are wonderfully valuable, and we need only here say a few words on the apparent discrepancy as to the time of the institution which is created by the assertion of St. Matthew and St. Mark on the one hand, and of St. Luke and St. Paul on the other, that the time was 'while they were eating,' and 'after supper,' respectively.

Of course to a Catholic student the difficulty cannot be great. Even apart from the guarantee that we have in the inspiration of Scripture, it would be most unreasonable to suppose that the Evangelists

could contradict one another, and that on a point which must have belonged to the dearest memories of their lives. The apparent difference between them only points to the necessity of finding a way of understanding them as in harmony, and this cannot be difficult to those who are real students of the Evangelists, and are accustomed to the very diverse modes of thought, and methods relating facts, which characterize them respectively. Still there is always something instructive to be learnt from an apparent difficulty like the present, and, unless we are mistaken, this is no exception to the rule. Moreover, the difference of language has seemed so important to some great names in Catholic literature, that it has led them to adopt ways of solution which will seem strange to many, as for instance the supposition that the Blessed Sacrament was not instituted by our Lord as a whole and a unity, but that He consecrated the Sacred Host at one stage of the supper and the Chalice at another, with some considerable interval between the two. More than one great writer has thought it necessary to advocate this solution, of which we cannot therefore speak with disrespect, although it runs counter to our ideas, and, as we believe, is not made in any way necessary by the words of the Sacred Text. It may be well therefore to see what can be said by way of solution of this apparent contradiction, without recourse to the hypothesis of a distinct break in the continuity of the Sacrifice as offered by our Lord.

There seem to be two methods of bringing these statements into entire concord. It may be supposed that the first Evangelists speak generally of all that occurred in the Cenacle as of a supper, or rather, as

an eating. This is very conceivable, when we remember that their narratives are so extremely brief, and give no detailed account at all. The chief point in their minds seems to have been to record the fact of our Lord's having institute the Blessed Eucharist in connection with the celebration of the Paschal feast. It was therefore important to use a word which suggested the Paschal supper, and that the cake or loaf used for the Blessed Eucharist was one of the cakes then put on the table. This was the all-important fact to the mind of St. Matthew and St. Mark. They give no account of any ceremonies used on the occasion, or of any discourse delivered by our Lord—they hasten on at once from the Paschal feast to its fulfilment in the Blessed Eucharist. Indeed, we are not absolutely certain that they mean the account which they give of the words used by our Lord to be an absolute and perfect record of those words, which it is most likely were more exactly handed on in the tradition of the Church as to the words to be used in the form of the Blessed Eucharist, while in an historical account of Its institution it would be a most important point to secure the record of the fact that it had been made as to the words of the form. In such an account accuracy might not seem necessary, and might even be avoided, on account of the danger of copies falling into the hands of the enemies of religion. It may be questioned, as has been said, whether the actual words of the Canon used in the Adorable Sacrifice were ever committed to writing in the very earliest ages. The earlier Evangelists, therefore, may be considered as giving a perfectly true account, as far as their purpose went, even if they were quite aware

that a statement such as that of St. Luke about the celebration 'after supper' might have to follow on their own statement, removing any misconception of their meaning and aims. St. Luke may have refrained from speaking of the time except in reference to the chalice, that he might guard himself against the possibility of being supposed directly to contradict his predecessors. This seems to be one way of explaining the apparent difference in the several texts. It amounts to taking the words used by St. Matthew, and St. Mark after him, in a large and vague sense.

We do not think that any one who has made a critical and familiar study of this style of St. Matthew, would hesitate to admit that this interpretation is quite consistent with the characteristics of the first Evangelist, more especially when it is remembered that there are here more actions than one of our Blessed Lord mentioned, which may not all have been actually coincident in point of time with the act qualified by the participle 'eating.' Our Lord took bread and broke, and gave thanks, and distributed to the disciples. If only the first of these actions was during the actual supper, St. Matthew would write as he has, not meaning that all the other actions took place during the actual meal, and he would not think it at all necessary, especially in so very summary a statement, to use any words to explain the transition from one to another. Unless he had some reason for making a number of successive statements on the point, he would, we think, have naturally used the language before us, although he knew that the breaking and blessing and giving thanks and distributing the bread were not while the Apostles were at supper.

In fact, we believe it to have been so, and that that is what he meant.

The earlier Gospels, then, do not say precisely that everything they speak of in regard to the consecration by our Lord of the Sacred Bread was done 'at supper,' or while the Apostles were eating. Their statement as to the time may fairly be limited to the action of our Blessed Lord in taking the bread, which may have been put by after having been 'taken,' until the time came for the solemn rite of the Holy Eucharist. It has been said in a former page, that at a certain stage of the Paschal supper the head of the household set apart one of the cakes or loaves on the table, which at a later time seems to have been given, with certain blessings, to others who were present. The bread which our Lord may have taken in this way may have been thus used for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, although not at the same stage of the proceedings of the evening with what is first mentioned in the history. The 'taking,' as it is thus called, of the bread or cake was a distinct part of the ritual, and may have been done in some manner which was in keeping with the solemnity of the occasion, and is likely to have made an impression on the minds of the Apostles, especially when connected with the use afterwards made of the cake, thus laid aside and again taken, when the time for its new use came. And indeed no action of our Lord's of this kind is likely to have been without its effect on their memories. This cake was already an important feature in the banquet of the Old Law, and if our Lord used it for the purpose of the Sacrifice and Sacrament which He was now to introduce, the fact may have stood out in their minds with a new importance of its own.

If the apparent discrepancy between the accounts of the earlier Evangelists, and those of St. Luke and St. Paul is to be explained in this way, we lose even the semblance of a contradiction, and it seems more natural to adopt this solution than any other. We may be quite certain that at all events the second consecration, that of the sacred chalice, took place after supper. St. Luke and St. Paul must have had their special reason for mentioning it so to have been, and, therefore, if we are to take the words of St. Matthew and St. Mark in the sense in which the participle translated in the Vulgate *manducantibus illis*, is taken as qualifying all the actions of our Lord, as well as the 'taking,' we are driven back on the hypothesis of the separation by a considerable interval of time, during which many different things must have occurred, of the two consecrations. It must be left to the theologians of the Church to say whether this is likely, and there can be little doubt that writers like St. Thomas, Salmeron, and Bellarmine,² could not have maintained the hypothesis of which we speak if they had seen in it anything absolutely untenable. In this case the Person offering the Sacrifice was our Lord Himself, the great High Priest of the New Law, Priest and Sacrifice in One, and the Unity of His Sacrifice could not be defective in any way. It must not, therefore, be supposed that this hypothesis seems to us objectionable in itself on merely intrinsic grounds, though it seems more likely that our Lord would not have separated the consecrations, and besides, if the one

² St. Thomas, *Lect. ad 1 Cor. xi.*; Salmeron, t. ix. tract 4; Bellarmine, *De Euch.* l. iv. c. 27. It must be remembered that these and other great writers may have thought the words of St. Matthew and St. Mark peremptory as settling the question as far as the first consecration was concerned.

took place while the supper was going on, and the other afterwards, there must have been a number of incidents in the interval which appear to us likely to have intervened, as we see from the narrative of St. John, which would have tended to break off the attention of the assistants from the solemn Sacrifice which was being offered. Thus we can hardly imagine what could have been allowed to interrupt it by our Lord. The solemn ceremonies of the High Mass, at the time of the collation of the various Orders, minor or holy, may be said to be interrupted in a certain sense by the successive portions of ritual which belong to each of these Orders, but they are not interposed between the consecration of the Sacred Host and the consecration of the Precious Blood. Still, for reasons alleged already, we must hesitate to reject this hypothesis, which explains the apparent difficulty by separating the two consecrations one from the other in point of time, as altogether untenable.

But we do not hesitate to say that it is altogether needless. Those familiar with the style and manner of St. Matthew can never allow that he means that in the sentence before us, the participle with which the sentence begins, and which is properly rendered, 'while they were eating,' is meant to qualify more than the one verb that first follows it, that is, the verb 'took.' This is what St. Matthew means us to infer—that the bread or cake was taken at that time, taken for a different purpose than that for which it is used in the ordinary course of the supper. The other actions of our Lord, of which St. Matthew speaks, and as to which he is closely followed by St. Mark, are not meant to be qualified by the participle we speak of. This would hold good if we

had no other account of the institution than that of St. Matthew and St. Mark, but it is made more than ever certain by the statement of St. Luke and St. Paul. The Apostle and the Evangelist did not write as they did, without a purpose, and that purpose is most likely to have been the desire to remove the possibility of any mistaken impression which a hasty reader of St. Matthew and St. Mark might have formed from them, as to the date in the evening of Holy Thursday of the great institution which filled so large a space in the hearts and minds of Christians. Instead of directly saying that the blessing and giving thanks and consecration, in the case of the bread, was not simultaneous with the 'taking'—which might have seemed a contradiction in terms of the former Evangelists—they left the true meaning of the words of those Evangelists to be inferred from the clear statement which they themselves now made as to the time of the second consecration, speaking also in a way, by the use of the word 'likewise'—which would convey to their readers the truth about the continuous unity of the Adorable Sacrifice. For they may have been as careful to shun all appearance of correcting their predecessors, as they were to complete their statements, and thus to correct the false impression which the misunderstanding of their words might have engendered.

We have said that a certain amount of authority is naturally to be given to the tradition which we have received from the earliest ages of the Church in the sacred Canon of the Mass. We cannot prove its authorship, and we know that there have been additions made to it from time to time, the authorship of which is known. But the circumstances of the case forbid the supposition that any material

change has been made, and there can be little question to a Catholic mind that we have in this holy document, if not the words themselves of St. Peter and the other Apostles, at least what is substantially identical with the form that they must have used, any alteration in which would certainly have been noted. It is remarkable, yet at the same time what we should expect to find, that the Canon of the Mass bears evident traces of the fact that it is not formed upon any simple copying of the Gospels. Some form or Canon must have preceded them in order of time, and it is hard to imagine that when once handed on by tradition it could ever have been changed. With regard to the points which have lately been discussed, the Canon unmistakably supports the view which supposes the earlier Evangelists to be supplemented, in their accounts of what passed on the evening of Holy Thursday, by St. Luke and St. Paul. There is no statement in the Canon that the cake or loaf of the Blessed Eucharist was taken by our Lord whilst the company was at supper. The statement there is that He took it, *pridie quam pateretur*.

It is notable also that the Canon preserves for us a feature of our Lord's action which is omitted in all the Gospels, namely, the raising of His eyes to heaven at the beginning of the consecration, *Qui pridie quam pateretur, accepit panem in sanctas ac venerabiles manus suas, et elevatis oculis in cælum ad Te Deum Patrem Omnipotentem, Tibi gratias agens*. We might suppose that it was our Lord's manner, when He made any prayer or thanksgiving to His Father, to raise His eyes to heaven, and so it might seem most natural for Him to do so on the occasion of which we are speaking. But the statement that He

actually did so seems to come to us from an eye-witness of the scene in the Cenacle, and does not seem likely to have been added by a later hand.

There is more difference between the words of the Canon, as we have it, in the latter portion of the holy form than in the earlier, as compared with the accounts given in the Gospels, and the Canon, as we have said, seems to follow the later New Testament accounts where they differed from the earlier. *Simili modo postquam cœnatum est accipiens et hunc præclarum calicem in sanctas ac venerabiles manus Suas, item Tibi gratias agens benedixit deditque discipulis Suis, dicens, Accipite et bibite ex eo omnes, Hic est enim calix Sanguinis Mei novi et æterni testamenti, mysterium fidei, qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum. Hæc quotiescunque feceritis, in Mei memoriam facietis.* It is clear that if these are the words which our Blessed Saviour used at the time, the accounts in the Gospels and in the Epistle of St. Paul are descriptions of the words He used, rather than actual repetitions of them. This is not unlikely, since the Gospels would be careful to preserve a sufficiently accurate description of them, and yet at the same time might guard against putting it in the power of any one who might possess himself of a copy, to know the very words of the form. The Canon leaves the question about the existence of any interval between the two consecrations just as the Gospels leave it, for it preserves the *postquam cœnatum est* as to the chalice, like St. Luke and St. Paul, without explaining the sense of the word which we translate *simili modo*.³ The introduction of the epithet *æterni* as applied to the New Testament, and of the words, *Mysterium Fidei*, are the other most signifi-

³ *ὁμοιωτως.*

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cant additions to our knowledge contained in the Canon.

Let us say a few words on this addition. All the sacraments may be called, in a certain sense, mysteries of faith or the faith, for in all of them the power of God brings about some effect which is a call on faith; but it seems as if the title is to be used in a peculiar and more proper manner of the Blessed Sacrament. When a priest consecrates the Blessed Sacrament and offers the Holy Sacrifice, when one of the faithful, it may be a child or an unlearned person, receives It, what they do sets forth to the Angels, who kneel around, the whole course of the mysteries which have succeeded, one to the other, from the beginning of the world—Creation, Redemption, Incarnation, the Atonement, the Life and Death of our Lord, the fruits of the Passion, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the institution of the Church, and all that we believe as future in the general resurrection of the flesh and the life everlasting—all are here contained. Some of the things we believe are more easy or more difficult than others, but the Blessed Sacrament surpasses all the other great works of God in Its calls on faith. The child who kneels before the priest, who is about to give it Holy Communion, has no light whatever but that of faith to empower it to grasp what it has to grasp, and all the evidence of the senses, and reason also, not only do not help it, but they bear their witness to the contrary of what it has to believe. As St. Thomas sings,

Visus, tactus, gustus, in Te fallitur,
Sed auditu solo tuto creditur.

And this is not a mystery that takes place once in our life, as in our Baptism or our Confirmation, or

in which there is nothing material and external to sight, as in other sacraments; but It is our daily food, in the case of priests and constant communicants, and the loving arrangement by which our Lord is always dwelling with us in the Tabernacle makes the exercise of faith in this mystery a perpetual and constant victory over every natural evidence. It might be called the mystery of charity, for there is no greater act of charity on the part of our Lord, no greater source to us of charity to our brethren, than what we do when we communicate devoutly. But charity shows itself and declares itself, and in that sense it has not the character of a mystery, as our Lord said that He did not call the Apostles servants, but friends, because all things that He had heard from His Father He had made known to them. We have to exercise our faith in the most marvellous way from the beginning to the end in this Sacrament. We have to believe that the words we say have the power of God, that what we hold in our hands is the Incarnate Son of God, that what we drink is the Precious Blood shed for the redemption of the world. Our Lord has left the Blessed Sacrament with us, in which we are to see and know Him really present among us, all days to the end of time, wherever the Sacred Host is reserved on the altar. It is as if we lived with Him, as Mary, or the Apostles, during a part of His life on earth did—a mystery, as St. John⁴ speaks of it, as ‘that which we have heard from the beginning, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and which our hands have handled, of the Word of Life’—and so deserving to be called for this, as well as for other reasons, the Mystery of Faith, in a manner which belongs to it

⁴ 1 St. John i. 1.

peculiarly, which might well engross all our time, occupy all our thoughts, and draw to itself all our affections, in the way in which all these will be given up to the Presence of God in eternity, save that that Presence will not be enjoyed by faith, but by sight.

It has come down to us from ancient tradition, and the Council of Trent thought the fact so important, for its theological aspect, that it put it on record in its authoritative declarations, that besides the institution of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, which our Lord delivered to the Apostles at this time, He also instituted at least one other, if not more, of the Seven Sacraments of the Church. The Council says that He then made the Apostles Priests of the New Testament. This truth is, in fact, conveyed sufficiently to religious-minded readers, in the injunction which St. Paul and the Evangelists record, that they were to do this in memory or commemoration of our Lord. The action which they were to do was the sacrificial action of offering to God, in another way, but to the same intent and purpose, the same Sacrifice which He had offered. In order to do this they must have the power of sacrifice, and in order to have this power they must have received it from Him. This therefore is a truth which cannot be left out of sight in any Catholic account of these proceedings in the Cenacle, though it was just one of that class of truths which we have so often spoken of, as not falling within the province of the Gospels to put on record, save so far as it is sufficiently recorded by the words of our Lord Himself. It is also natural to suppose that if the Apostles were then and there ordained priests, this must have been done by our Lord with

some simple ceremony and prayer, the foundation and germ of the holy ritual which the Church has always used, and which we suppose to have included the laying on of hands, among other things, of which we hear often in the Acts and Epistles—though the simple imposition of hands may have been used for the collating of other offices besides the priesthood, some distinguishing words or forms being used on the several occasions. The mention of the priesthood in the Council of Trent is not certainly meant to exclude the supposition that other orders may have been conferred, and other sacraments instituted at the same time, and we are thus led naturally to the statements of the contemporaries on this subject.

Another point which in the same way enlarges our thoughts concerning this holy evening, is virtually contained in the fact of which we have already had to speak in this chapter, namely, that our Lord and His companions changed the room in which they had hitherto been assembled for another, probably a larger one in an adjoining part of the dwelling. This would make it easy for the Blessed Sacrament to be celebrated with more dignity and reverence, perhaps, than might have been the case if they had remained by the table which was still covered with the remains of the Paschal supper. It would also allow, if it were so, for the presence of some others as well as the Apostles, who might also receive the Holy Communion from the hands of our Blessed Lord. It is natural to suppose that our Blessed Lady was present at this Communion, and with her some of the holy women and some chosen disciples, among whom may have been the blessed man who was the host of our Lord on this occasion. These

are things on which the Christian imagination is free to feed itself at will, so long as nothing is presumed against the mind of the Church.

It will be remembered that we have yet to speak of a considerable, or rather, the longer portion of the discourse which St. John has recorded for us as delivered on this evening, concluding with the prayer to the Eternal Father for the Church. We may suppose that with this, as with other discourses of our Lord, the Evangelist may have been guided to leave several things unsaid. But the conversation, or rather the discourse as we have it, with an occasional enlargement by our Lord on some point not fully dwelt on in the report, is already such as to have occupied some considerable space of time. If to this discourse there were added any long explanations of the deeply pregnant truths which relate to the Adorable Sacrifice, and to the other sacraments, the words spoken, but not chronicled for us, must have been many, even if the sacred rites themselves did not consume much time. We are tempted to wish that St. John had been guided to put on record the whole of our Lord's words, but we may be quite sure that the volume of doctrine on these lofty subjects which would thus have been preserved, would have swelled his Gospel to a very large bulk indeed. It is St. John⁵ who has told us that 'there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written.' The words rise to our minds when we think of the holy instructions which may have been given on this evening of Holy Thursday, although we may be quite sure that St. John, if he had a commission to

⁵ St. John xx.

record all that our Lord may have said on the subjects of which we are speaking, would have done so with all the brevity and modesty and reserve which he always showed in dealing with the words of His beloved Master and Lord, and the treasure which the Church would have received must have been of incalculable value.

But there is another side to the fact that we are left without so much that we are disposed to long for of this kind. The words of St. John, which we have just now quoted, have had a two-fold meaning assigned to them in the Christian writers. They may mean that the world would not contain all that could have been written, especially on such subjects as those of which we now speak, because the burthen of the revelation thus made would have been something that proud and sensual men would not be able to bear. We are quite certain that the substance of the instructions, for instance, which our Lord may have given either on this evening of Holy Thursday or at any other time, on the Sacrifice of the Altar, on the Blessed Sacrament, and on the sacramental system in general, and on the several other sacraments in particular, has reached us, as it was meant to reach us, in the teaching of the Catholic Church, His appointed channel for the communication of such truths, and which has been guided by the Holy Ghost bringing all things to her remembrance, whatsoever He may have said to the Apostles, to put forward the doctrines of which we are treating in due time and measure and fulness. We know, too, how the world has received the teaching of the Church. If that teaching had all been put into the pages of Scripture by St. John and the other Evange-

lists, or by St. Peter and St. Paul in their Epistles, would the world have bowed its proud intellect to the teaching, with more docility than it has shown with regard to the teaching of the Catholic Church? On the contrary, it would simply have rejected the teaching of Scripture on these subjects, all the more readily inasmuch as it is more easy to cavil over the meaning of a book written centuries ago than it is to dispute over the teaching of a living authority. No—it may be partly in mercy to the world, to the insanity of the pride of human intelligence, even among the children of the Church, that these things have not all been told us in writing. The word of the living Church is enough for the humble, and the words of St. John or St. Peter in old books would not be enough for the proud. From the days of the Apostles down to the present day there has never been wanting the class of men of whom St. Paul⁶ says that they are ‘condemned by their own judgment,’ by the mere fact that they claim to interpret for themselves the authority to which they profess to submit. That is, they claim to be saved by their own reason, not by faith. And surely it is not difficult to imagine that one reason why we are told so little in Scripture on the matters which we are to receive on faith, may be that a merciful Providence holds back many things against which the world would be certain to rebel.

The sacramental system of the Church is the most tenderly beautiful, and, so to speak, thoughtful and considerate, invention of the Sacred Heart of our Lord. It is His device for bringing the fruits of His Precious Blood home, as we may say, to every door,

⁶ Titus iii. 10.

to every contingency and need of which our poor frail mortal lives are liable. It surrounds us with grace from the moment when we enter the world to the moment at which we leave it to stand before the tribunal of our Judge. It takes us as we leave our mother's womb, and gives us at once a better birth, the rights conferred in which will place us before the throne of God as His children, if it pleases Him to call us away immediately, and without more ado makes us inheritors of eternal bliss. It strengthens us as soon as we become capable of being exposed to the fiery temptations of the enemy, with a new and special grace of Christian fortitude and robust vigour. If we fall under any trial, it is at hand to raise us up and restore the spiritual life we have lost, and it supplies us, as the Israelites were fed in the desert, with heavenly food, which gives us the life which our Lord came to impart, and which is nothing less than His own Body, which He gave for the life of the world. It has a special provision for us when the time comes for us to leave this life, and sends us forth on that last journey with the remains of our sins and imperfections wiped away once more by the Precious Blood. It provides, too, for the permanent supply of the ministers of the altar by another mighty ordinance, and it blesses and makes heavenly the union of man and woman, without which society could not last, by a mystery which reflects the union between our Lord Himself and the Church.

Indeed, our Lord has poured forth all the riches of His love for men as they are in this present life, which is so soon to pass away for something far better, almost as if He intended it to last for ever. And yet the sacramental system, in which His tenderness is so wonderfully embodied and enshrined,

has been the great object of the rebellion of the world. A great part of Europe, as has been said by a thoughtful writer of the seventeenth century, practically broke off from the Church that it might not have to use the Sacrament of Penance, that most wonderful instance of His love, for it provides for His own children in the case that they should forsake Him. It is as if the father of the Prodigal in the parable had set aside the best robe and the fatted calf to be ready for his son in case he should go away. The sacraments, though they are, by the love of God, administered by men like ourselves, yet are not men like ourselves, and are not deprived of their saving power by the unworthiness of their ministers. They cannot hurt us, or injure us, or be cold and hard and harsh and unkind, or resentful or unforgiving. They embody the love of the Good Shepherd. And yet, besides those who vilify them or speak against them because they do not know what they are, how many are there among the children of the Church, who know what it is to live by them and upon them, who can still bear to neglect them, or to hate them, or to profane them!

It may therefore have been not without a tender consideration for the hardness of heart and the indomitable pride of the human intelligence, that we have so little in the Gospel narrative about these wonderful institutions, and of such effusions of love as the Adorable Sacrifice. But it is fair to suppose that something concerning them may have been said by our Lord on this night, as well as something more than had been said before by Him on the Blessed Sacrament Itself. The contemplatives of the Church have drawn a few pictures for us of these omitted incidents in the

Cenacle, on which the pious soul is at liberty to feed at will. The writer⁷ whom we have more than once used in the course of these volumes, although never but sparingly, describes for us the scene as it was represented to her. There is this which strikes us in such productions, that they are often wonderfully picturesque and vivid in what they describe as seen by the eye, but that when we turn to them for words of our Lord Himself or instructions on this or that point of doctrine, they are little more than repetitions of other sayings of His which we know from Scripture, and they sometimes even reflect the particular teaching of some school of theology under which the contemplative has been trained. In the case of which we speak, our Lord is said to pour forth a long prayer to His Eternal Father, in which He speaks of His design in instituting the system of the sacraments. The doctrine of this prayer is the common doctrine of theologians.

We may suppose that something of the sort passed, and we may unite ourselves in thought to the devout St. John or St. Peter, and the rest, as they received the instruction. The one heart that could fitly understand the whole of the loving provisions which were then made for the children of men by the Saviour of the world, Who was now going forth to die for them, was, we may suppose, there, and must have given Him the tenderest and most glowing thanks for His great love. But no one there, not even Mary, could understand as did our Lord all the richness of the provision thus made for us, the love with which He gave it, and what it was to cost Him to pay the price of our redemption on the Cross, or with what generosity He made the sacrifice, or, still more, the

⁷ *Maria de Agreda*, t. iii.

pain that overwhelmed His Heart at the thought of the ingratitude and the comparative scantiness of fruit in the souls for whom that sacrifice was to be made—a pain which shot through His Heart with an anticipation of the agony of Gethsemani. The holy women, who were to be the faithful companions of Mary during the coming trial of her Compassion, were doubtless there also, sharing the intense and solemn joy of our Lord's own Heart, without knowing, as Mary may have known, of the sorrows which were so close at hand. These things must be left, as has been said, to the devout Christian imagination.

It has already been mentioned more than once that the two first Evangelists, St. Matthew and St. Mark, after their very short account of the Last Supper and the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, apparently tell us that our Lord added certain words after giving the chalice of the Precious Blood to the disciples, like others which St. Luke also mentions as having been said by Him at an earlier stage of the Last Supper—indeed at its very beginning. The words are much the same in all three Evangelists, with a slight difference which requires here no explanation, as we have already intimated our conviction that the same words were in substance said by Him both on the earlier and on the later occasion. We take them now as they stand in the text of St. Matthew and St. Mark. ‘Amen, I say to you, and I say to you, that I will drink no more from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it new with you in the Kingdom of My Father, in the Kingdom of God.’ It may be worth our while to spend a few moments on these

words themselves, considered as having been uttered by our Divine Lord as the two Evangelists tell us, after the administration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Some Catholic writers, misled by the notion, which has often influenced them in similar questions, that the same or similar words of our Lord are always or generally to be understood as said but once, have taken it for granted that the words in St. Luke are identical both in time and form with those now before us, and have found a difficulty in supposing them to have been said after the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, because our Lord speaks of this 'fruit of the vine,' whereas that which was given to the disciples on this occasion after the consecration must have been the Precious Blood of our Lord under the species of wine. The writers of whom we speak were probably influenced by the fear of giving any handle to the heretics who deny the Real Presence and the dogma of Transubstantiation. As we believe that these words were said by our Lord after the consecration of the holy chalice, we are bound to meet their scruples, although they are already sufficiently answered by Catholic writers. For it happens that many of these think that the words were said after the administration of the chalice to the disciples, though perhaps not so many will be found to say that they were said both after and before. This is a simple question of Harmony, to which, as has often been said, it is much to be wished that the great Catholic commentators had paid more deep and careful attention than they have had time to bestow.

We think, with a great number of such writers, that the words before us, even if, as we believe, they were spoken of the chalice of the Blessed Sacrament

on this occasion, do not strengthen the case of the Protestants, and that no good argument against the Catholic doctrine can be drawn from them. St. Paul, speaking undoubtedly of the Sacred Body of our Lord, says: 'As often as ye shall eat this bread and drink this chalice, ye shall show the death of the Lord until He come,'⁸ using the word bread for the Body as the words fruit of the vine are here used by our Lord for His Precious Blood. Cornelius à Lapide thinks it most probable that these words were uttered before the Blessed Eucharist had been instituted, but he explains how the difficulty of which we speak is to be answered. He says, among other things, that the Blood of Christ may be called wine as the Body of Christ is called by St. Paul bread, by reason of the substances of bread and wine which were there before the consecration, and the species of bread and wine which remain after the consecration, and he gives other reasons.⁹ He thinks that St. Matthew and St. Mark are speaking of the words as we are considering them here, as said after the consecration, and his difference from ourselves in the Harmony can make no difference in the doctrine of the passage. We think the words were said both before and after the institution, as has been already said.

We may add that it seems unlikely that our Lord would speak in any other way of the Blessed Sacrament at this stage of what we may speak of as its history, when it was as yet a secret mystery, perfectly unknown outside the Church. And if it be true, as we believe, that these words were a repetition of those which, as St. Luke tells us, He had used at the beginning of the Paschal feast, it is more natural,

⁸ 1 Cor. xi. 26.

⁹ *In Matt. xxvi. 29.*

and almost necessary, that He should speak of the new chalice as He had before spoken of the cup of the Old Testament.

The two passages taken together bring out the whole of a beautiful doctrine which belongs to the full intelligence of the greatness of the magnificent liberality of God in dealing with His children through our Lord. The Paschal feast was the commemoration of a wonderful mercy of God, and the preparation of the minds of those who devoutly celebrated it for something far greater and better. The whole system of rites by which the mercies which had been shown to the chosen people of God were commemorated, was a wonderful boon to the devout Israelites of many generations. But that measure of mercy, however great, was as nothing compared to the mercies which the Christian Sacrifice was not only to commemorate, but to renew and keep perpetually alive and fresh until the end of the world. But yet there was to be something more, for the Christian system of sacraments and ordinances, even the Blessed Sacrament and the Adorable Sacrifice Itself, looks forward to a still higher and more lasting fulfilment hereafter, and this was as present to the mind of our Lord as were the immense graces and privileges of the Gospel covenant.

‘It remains,’ says the great theologian Vasquez, ‘that we should see what that new and precious wine was which Christ was to drink with His disciples.’ Then he quotes the opinion of St. Augustine, who says that it was the immortality of the body, which Christ at that time had not, but was afterwards to possess. ‘But the immortality of the body, when compared to the Blood of Christ, which we receive in the Blessed Sacrament; does not appear to be some-

thing more precious. Therefore I do not see how what is here said can suit that alone, for "new" here signifies something precious. Therefore I understand by this new wine, beatitude itself—that is, the vision and enjoyment of the Divine essence, which in Holy Scripture is called metaphorically wine, and drink, and food. In Psalm xvi. the fulness and satisfaction which comes from food and drink is put for beatitude itself, as when it is said, "I shall be satiated when Thy glory shall appear," and in St. Matt. viii. we are told of the many who shall come from the east and west, the north and south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. And it is said in St. Luke, "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God," for our Lord had been speaking before that of the eternal rewards. And He says in St. Luke, "I dispose to you a Kingdom, as My Father hath disposed to Me, that you should eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom." It cannot shut out this interpretation that Christ, even in His mortal life, saw God and enjoyed His possession, and that He said these words, "until I drink it new with you," and the rest. For He did not say absolutely, until the days that I drink it new, but "till I drink it new with you." For, although He drank already of the new and precious wine, yet He drank of it Himself alone, and not with the Apostles at a banquet, which He shared with others. He said, therefore, that He would no more drink in this mortal life of that fruit of the Vine, which had been consecrated, and the rest.'¹⁰

These words of our Lord, then, may be considered as crowning and carrying on to the final consummation what He had before said in the course of this

¹⁰ Vasquez, t. iii. Disp. 186, c. vi. (in 3rd p. S. Thomæ, q. 78).

evening, expressing doubtless what was in His Sacred Heart, of the joy with which He had celebrated, first the Paschal supper with His disciples, and then the great Banquet of the Blessed Sacrament, in which the ancient types were fulfilled. It was a joy to Him to bring to an end, in so glorious a way, those ancient types, which had been the support of thousands of souls dear to Him in all generations since they were instituted, and so the occasion of immense thankfulness and thanksgiving on His part to His Eternal Father for all the fruit which He had gained thereby. But when He celebrated those old rites with reverent love and gratitude, His Heart was also full of great desire for the nobler and more efficacious mysteries which were to succeed them, and the joy over the old was mingled with the greater joy at the introduction of the new. The words about not drinking of the fruit of the vine, used after the sacred chalice had been consecrated and given, express the same feeling of joy and gratitude. But they also show that His Heart was already occupied with the desire for the coming of the day of which He spoke, when His bliss was to be made perfect by the communication, to those whom He had now made partakers of the choicest boons which men can receive in this mortal life and in this valley of sorrows and exile, of the enduring, unchanging, and most transcendent delights which are yet to come in the home of His Father—that is, the possession of God in the Beatific Vision. We may well think that there can be nothing greater than the Blessed Sacrament which we have to look forward to. But there is something greater, the Beatific Vision in Heaven. These words, then, as we say, are those of One Who is parting from His friends after giving them

a great boon and a rich feast, and Who lovingly says to them that He will not taste of it again till He meets them again under conditions still more happy. So they might well be used on the two occasions on which our Lord used them on this evening, when He was about to supplant the Paschal feast by the Blessed Sacrament, and when the Blessed Sacrament had been introduced into the world, and nothing remained to look forward to but the consummation of all beatitude in the Beatific Vision. Nor is there anything even among the gifts of the love of our Lord that is more closely connected with the Beatific Vision as its cause, and as the means of securing it to us, and as in some measure its type and anticipation, than the Blessed Sacrament. It is the cause of perseverance, without which we may fail to secure it. It unites us to our Lord, Whose Life It makes our life. It is in some way a foreshadowing of Beatitude, inasmuch as the Blessed in Heaven are knit together in that perfect unity and charity which is there by means of the sight of God, as the members of the Church on earth are knit together by the food of the Blessed Sacrament. It may be said of that Divine Vision, that it is all in all, one and the same to millions of saints, as if it were the heritage of each one, wholly and exclusively his own, as it is sung of the Blessed Sacrament—

Sumit unus, sumunt mille,
Quantum isti, tantum ille,
Nec sumptus consumitur.

But these are lofty subjects, and we have no space now for an attempt to treat them as they deserve.

It will be remembered that we have followed an arrangement according to which these words which St. Matthew and St. Mark have recorded for us of

our Blessed Lord are to be placed at the end of the short account of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, and are followed by certain words of His related to us by St. John, which are indeed the beginning of the second part of the discourse in the Cenacle of which the Beloved Disciple has been chosen to be the historian. As we are now closing the present volume, and as that second part of the discourse is far too long and far too important to be considered in a short space and hurriedly, it would be natural to defer the beginning of its treatment. But the first words of our Lord seem to be so closely connected both with what our Lord had just done, and with what He had just said, that it seems better to consider at once at least the first sentence. 'I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He will take away, and every one that beareth fruit He will purge it that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean by reason of the word which I have spoken to you.'

That our Lord should compare Himself to a vine, and use the figure also to bring in the necessity of that perfect dependence of His disciples on Himself on which their whole spiritual life hangs, more especially after having just given them His Blessed Body and Blood in the Blessed Sacrament, is perfectly natural and intelligible. It was His well-known way to take His images and figures from what He had mentioned, or from things that happened before His eyes, the incidents of the day, or the scenery about Him. Nor can we wonder that St. John did not connect the words before us expressly, by any mention of such things which might have been related, which would have illustrated what he was

about to say. It has already been said, that in his history of this discourse he omits everything that can be omitted, and adheres to our Lord's words only. It is thought that the beautiful words which he records about the Good Shepherd were occasioned by our Lord's seeing a shepherd leading out his flock from one of the folds,¹¹ of which there were so many about Jerusalem, and that what He said about His being the 'light of the world,'¹² was occasioned either by the sunrise over the Mount of Olives, or by a ceremony of the feast of Tabernacles at which He was present. There is no improbability in these conjectures, but there is nothing about the incidents which are thus supposed in the text of St. John. But the use of the image of the vine cannot surprise us here.

'I am the true Vine and My Father is the Husbandman.' It is to be noted in the first place that in the original Greek the definite article is used, as if He had meant to speak of some well-known and conspicuous vine—'I am the real Vine, the one Vine, the true Vine,' and perhaps not without a special reference to the parable which He had lately delivered of the Vineyard and the Wicked Husbandmen, which, again, had been founded upon the parable of Isaias, in which the Jewish Church is compared to a vine well planted and protected, but, notwithstanding, unfruitful. He may also have meant to carry on the thoughts contained in the words which He had just used, for it has been already said that the words immediately preceding this passage may have naturally suggested the image. The vine is the most fruitful of trees when its produce is compared to its bulk, the single and not very large stem

¹¹ St. John x.¹² St. John viii.

of which seems to be capable of fertilizing and enriching with an immense abundance of fruit a number of branches, which may be trained to a surprising distance from it, and yet teem with wonderful life, so long as they are not disconnected from that one stem. It is a happy image of our Lord in His Church, every far-reaching branch of which abounds with fruitfulness which fills the whole world, and is the joy of the earth, so long as it remains in connection with the parent vine, but is absolutely fruitless and sterile when the divine Unity is interrupted. There is no tree more fruitful nor any whose fruit is so sweet, and has such power of supporting life and strength by the wine which it produces. Our Lord here says of Himself that He is this true Vine. He speaks of His Sacred Human Nature, the power and life and fertility of which comes from its union with the Divine Nature in One Person, and which is the channel and instrument appointed by God for the communication of all graces to mankind, whose nature He shares therein, that they may be made partakers, as St. Peter says, of the Divine Nature.

There is one of the Psalms, which seems to belong historically to the date of the first captivity of the ten tribes of the schismatical kingdom of Samaria, in which this image of the vine is used as a figure of our Lord in the Jewish Church, as here He uses it of Himself in His Life in the Christian Church, as St. Paul uses it in more places than one. In the Vulgate version it is the Seventy-ninth Psalm, beginning, *Qui regis Israel intende, Qui deducis velut ovem Joseph.* The holy writer complains, as it were, of the misfortunes of the nation which God has chosen for His own :

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Vineam de Egypto transtulisti, eiecisti gentes, et plantasti eam.

Dux itineris fuisti in conspectu ejus, plantasti radicēs ejus, et implevit terram,

Operuit montes umbra ejus, et arbusta ejus cedros Dei.

Extendit palmites suos usque ad mare, et usque ad flumen propagines ejus.

Ut quid destruxisti maceriam ejus, et vindemiant eam omnes, qui prætergrediuntur viam?

Exterminavit eam aper de silva, et singularis ferus depastus est eam.

And he goes on to pray—

Deus virtutum, convertere et respice de cælo et vide, et visita vineam istam.

Et perface eam, quam plantavit dextera tua, et super Filium hominis, quem confirmasti tibi.

This pleading for the vine for the sake of the Son of Man, 'Whom Thou hast confirmed for Thyself,' is repeated again almost immediately after, and it falls in very well with the idea which seems to underlie the words of the text. For it is because of the Incarnation and the raising therein of the Human Nature to the union with the Divine in the Person of our Lord, that the vine has any claim on the merciful regard of God. Our Lord's words go on to describe the manner followed by God in His Providence in dealing with those who are one with Him, as it were, shoots and branches and tendrils of Him as the Vine. 'I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman.' In His Divine Nature He is one with His Father, and in this sense He is the Husbandman, but it is in His Human Nature that He is capable of the pruning and cultivation of which He speaks, that is, in those who are His, and are united to Him as members of His Body, and of His flesh and of His bones, and He speak of them as of Himself, for they are one with Himself. No

language can so well express the closeness of the union between them as that which He here uses.

‘I am the true Vine and My Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He will take away, and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean by reason of the word which I have spoken unto you.’ It may at first sight appear to be strange why our Blessed Lord should begin this most loving discourse concerning Himself as the Vine and the disciples as the branches, by describing that portion of the dealing of the Father with the branches, which consists in the rejection of those branches which are unfruitful, and which in consequence are rejected. It may perhaps be that with the immense and ineffable mercy in their minds which they had just before received, the disciples, who must have been supposed to have been always full of brotherly charity, may have had Judas in their minds, and have marvelled, as one great demonstration of their Master’s love followed upon another, how it was that he was so long absent, and most of all as the holy rites proceeded, and when they were themselves made ‘Priests of the New Testament,’ and yet one of their number was left out. And when the great gift of all was given to them in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, it may have seemed still more wonderful that one of the Twelve should be missing.

If troubling surmises rose in their souls, it would be a reason for our Blessed Lord to settle them in the most charitable way, and so He may have had the case of Judas in mind when He spoke these words. At all events, we may be quite sure that, even if his brother Apostles did not think of the traitor, his

most loving Master had him in His Sacred Heart, from which the words proceeded. 'My Father is the Husbandman,' and as the husbandman prunes some branches in order to produce in them greater fruitfulness, while others from which nothing can be hoped he cuts away altogether, so My Father 'every branch in Me'—that is, in that mystical Vine which has its whole living and being from Me—'that beareth not fruit, He taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, He cleanseth it that it may bear more fruit.' A little later on, when He speaks again of the unfruitful branch, 'He adds some details which are more terrible, for He speaks of such a branch as being cut off, and gathered up, and cast into the fire, and burning. Now He merely uses a word which answers to 'remove,' not specifying in what manner and purpose the removal takes place. He describes in a figure what had been done now to Judas. He had been 'taken away.' And He says of the branches that bear fruit, that such the Father cleanses, that they may bear more fruit.

Our Lord adds, as if the comparison between the rest of them and Judas was still in His mind, 'Now,' or already, 'you are clean, because of the word I have spoken to you.' When He says that they are clean, He uses the word which is the root of the verb which He had used when He said that the Father 'cleanseth,' or as it is translated in another version, 'purgeth,' the branches that bring forth fruit that they be made more fruitful. It may describe a process which has many stages, from the getting rid of positive filth or defilement, to the removal of the slightest imperfections or defects, and so to the most perfect purification and adornment of that which is thus treated with the highest possible grace and

beauty. Our Lord seems in these words to refer still to the contrast between Judas and the others, for, after the washing of the feet at the beginning of the supper, when St. Peter, having first refused out of humility to accept this service from our Lord, had changed his tone, and had said, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head,' our Lord had answered him, 'He that is washed needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly, and you are clean, but not all.' And St. John adds that He said this because He knew who he was that was to betray Him. 'Therefore He said, You are not all clean.' All through our Lord uses the same adjective for the word 'clean.' We understand Him therefore here to be carrying on the same thought, and to refer to His former words. He had told them before that they were all clean with the exception of the traitor. Now He has mentioned the manner in which God in His Providence would deal with the unfruitful branch, and of the rest He says that God will carry on the process of further and further purification with them, but they are already clean and pure through His grace.

The words, 'By reason of the word which I have spoken to you,' may be variously understood. They may mean the whole of His teaching, or the particular teaching which He had been delivering on this evening, or perhaps they may refer to the doctrine embodied in that beautiful action of His own, the washing of the feet, which has always been considered as having been a kind of parable representing the purification of the soul from the dust of daily imperfections which is so much insisted upon by spiritual writers as needful, or most useful, before the reception of any great sacrament, especially the

Holy Eucharist. Thus they amount to a reference to His former words, 'He that is clean washed needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly' when this has been done—as if He had now said, 'Ye are clean, as I told you a short time ago.'

There are thus two classes into which our Lord divides the branches of the vine, that is, the members of His Body the Church, the fruitful and the unfruitful. He says of the former that they are to be subjected to a treatment of purification by the providence of God, in order that their fruitfulness may be increased. He does not draw out in detail the process of purification, as it would indeed require many long discourses to do so. For the saints of God, as long as this time of probation lasts for them, are always under the watchful eye and tender care of this most loving of Fathers, that they may not lose any opportunity or means of grace by which their crown for the next world may be augmented in beauty and glory, before 'the night cometh when no man can work.' He has His appointed measure of grace and of merit for each one, and the process is continued until this has been reached. It is well worth remark that our Lord, so immediately after imparting to the Apostles the great boon of the Blessed Sacrament for the refectio and beautifying of their souls, should turn their thoughts to what has so much of loving severity in it as the further and continual purgation which He has ordained for them, instead of leading them to dwell upon the immense treasures of grace which they had already received therein. Perhaps His Sacred Heart was so full of fervour and Divine love that it chose to think first of what might give the greatest glory to His Father, which was, above

all other things, the fruitfulness in the souls of the Apostles of the immense boon which had been bestowed upon them in the Blessed Sacrament. Whereas the greatness of the boon in itself was His own work and gift, and so what He would naturally pass over without special mention. For it is wonderful how little our Lord ever says about His own greatest gifts. And He had just before been speaking, as we have supposed, of Judas, and He had said that the Father had taken him away, 'a branch in Me that beareth not fruit,' as if this was the chief thing that had made Judas worthy of removal, that he had been a member of our Lord and yet had been unfruitful. And so now, speaking of those who were fruitful, He mentions first of all of the measures taken by the Father that they might become still more fruitful, and so correspond to the designs and desires of God in His wonderful mercy to them. Perhaps there is here a silent allusion to the language of the Prophet Ezechiel about the vine, where he says that if not fruitful it is fit for nothing, 'Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel, the ends of it and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for any work?'¹³

Our Lord does not dwell further on any explanation of the process to which the souls of the Apostles and of all good Christians are subjected in His Father's providential guidance, which answers to the pruning of the fruitful branches of the vine. Generally speaking, it may be said, that after the soul has been purged by penance of serious faults and smaller defects, positive imperfections, negligences and the

¹³ Ezech. xv. 4.

like, there will still remain many 'superfluities,' in this and other things, which may be subjects for the pruning-knife of this Heavenly Gardener or Husbandman, Who has such a love for the soul as to be content with nothing short of the high perfection of beauty of which He sees it to be capable. The intelligence may have its defects and the affections may have theirs. There may be the darkness of comparative ignorance on many matters as to which the soul is meant to reflect the light of Heaven, many erroneous judgments, many false traditions, many prejudices which are like motes in the eye, and dim the accuracy of its gaze or narrow the field of its vision. There are curiosities and frivolities of the mind which dwarf or fritter away its powers, things of little importance that are rated beyond their worth, and in consequence, things of immense moment which do not gain its attention. These answer, in the intelligence of man, to the superfluities which the pruning-knife must remove if the branch of the vine is to be perfectly fruitful, bearing all ripe fruitage which the gardener desires. And it may be the same with the will and the affections, which may range over a thousand objects which do not deserve their homage, and in consequence they waste their energies and their warmth on objects which cannot draw out the true and deep and fertile devotion with which their Maker enriched them. And so He applies to the souls which are His the pruning-knife, which cuts them down for the sake of making them more prolific, and this is the history of those of whom our Lord here speaks as the branches that bear some fruit and are to be made to bear more. His own grace is one great element which He uses in this beautiful history, of which we shall

only see the details when we come to see everything in His presence. And if the study of His action in the order of the physical creation is so beautiful and entrancing, that the noblest minds find satisfactory occupation in making it the employment of their lives, and are fain to confess that it is a story of wisdom, and contrivance, and resource which has no end, how much more wonderful will be the study which sets before us the marvellous wisdom of God with each individual soul of those whom He has determined to share His eternal glories in Heaven!

It is of this process, which our Lord describes as one of pruning, that the Church using another figure to express her thought, sings—

Scalpri salubris ictibus,
Et tunsione plurima,
Fabri polita malleo,
Hanc saxa molem construunt,
Aptisque juncta nexibus,
Locantur in fastigio.¹⁴

And indeed there may be no single image that can perfectly answer to the truth in this gradual formation of the saints. The Apostles had been many months in our Lord's own company, and had been tried and trained by Him to a very high perfection indeed, although the Gospels do not refrain from letting us know what kinds of defects were still to be found in them. But this process was perhaps only in its beginning with them. Our Lord in this discourse hints at one of the great measures of this Divine discipline to which they were to be subjected after the Resurrection and Ascension, the separation from Himself as far as His visible companionship was concerned, and it is easy for us to imagine that

¹⁴ *In dedicatione Ecclesiæ.*

this must have been something entirely beyond our conceptions. As we can have no adequate idea of what the delights of that companionship were to them, or to loving souls like the blessed Magdalene, or above all, to our Blessed Lady, His Mother, so we are equally unable to understand the intensity of the void which His absence must have occasioned to those who were accustomed to His presence. Yet this sensible separation was, as it seems, of positive benefit to their souls, an actual gain, the supplying in a far higher measure of what they lost. St. John could no longer recline on His Sacred Heart, nor the others listen as the words of eternal life flowed from His sacred lips. Here was a pruning indeed, yet we know that they were strengthened to submit to it without repining, and the holy company went back to the Cenacle from Mount Olivet, full of peace and consolation and joy. They were the holiest souls on earth, the Apostles and the first disciples collected around the Holy Mother of God herself, and we know how such persons when united in the love of God and devoted to one single object for His service with their whole hearts, grow in mutual harmony and affection. A very holy religious community is the faintest approach to such a society as theirs that the world can know now, and we know how to live in such a company is a kind of foretaste of Heaven.

But how soon was all this heavenly atmosphere dissipated and blown away by the storms of persecution! How little could the Apostles have enjoyed the delights of the society one of another, even before the time came, and it came very soon, when they had to take up that life of the continual change from place to place, of ceaseless activity, of constant

exposure to danger, of solitary wandering, of wrestling single-handed one by one with all the enmities of the world and all the assaults of Hell, which we commonly associate with the work of the Apostolate. St. Paul¹⁵ describes their work in a famous passage to the Corinthians, and we may well suppose that though he 'laboured more abundantly than they all,' he had not more to suffer than the rest.

And we see from him also the great sacrifices they all had to make, the renunciation of all that was dear to them, not merely the homes they had long before left, but the far tenderer feelings which knit them to the Temple and to Jerusalem and the worship to which they had been accustomed, to the Holy City and the holy nation with all the privileges which they had been brought up to consider as the exclusive possession of their race, to all of which they had now to become strangers and in a certain sense enemies. St. Paul speaks of himself and the other Apostles as of those miserable gladiators who were reserved for the last in the games, whose business was to fight till death put an end to the bloody sport. 'We are a spectacle to the world, and to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ, we are weak, but you are strong, you are honourable, but we are without honour. Even unto this hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no fixed abode, and we labour working with our own hands, we are reviled and we bless, we are persecuted and we suffer it, we are ill-spoken of and we entreat, we are made the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all even until now.'

We have said, what a process of pruning was this !

¹⁵ 2 Cor. iii.—vii.

And yet it has another side which the same Apostle speaks of in his second letter to the same Church of Corinth. 'In all things we suffer tribulation, but are not distressed; we are straitened, but we are not destitute; we suffer persecution, but we are not forsaken; we are cast down, but we perish not, always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies. For we who live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh.' The great object which kept them up in all their trials was that which our Lord here mentions as the result which was to be gained by this pruning process of which we are speaking, the fruitfulness of the branches of the Vine. 'So then death worketh in us, but life in you. . . . We also believe, and therefore we speak, knowing that He Who raised up Jesus will raise us up also with Jesus, and place us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the grace abounding through many may abound in thanksgiving to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man is corrupted, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our present tribulation, which is momentary and light, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.' The passage which follows in St. Paul carries on the same idea. This thought of fruitfulness as the result of suffering is very prominent in this passage of our Blessed Lord, as also that of the joys and spiritual delights with which labour for God is ordinarily rewarded even

here below, and even when there is no great amount of external fruit produced. All these things are features in the condition of the servants of God under this discipline, which our Lord here speaks of as the pruning which is the work of His Father in His loving providence over the souls whom He loves, and who are members of His Son.

But here, for the time, we must pause, for our Lord connects what He has said of this image of the Vine, with a great and most important doctrine, which will be best treated of in a separate chapter.

APPENDIX.

Harmony of the Gospels.

§ 149.—*Judas betrays our Lora.*

St. Matt. xxvi. 1—16.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended all these words, He said to His disciples, You know that after two days shall be the Pasch, and the Son of Man shall be delivered up to be crucified.

Then were gathered together the chief priests and ancients of the people into the court of the High Priest, who was called Caiphas, and they consulted together, that by subtilty they might apprehend Jesus, and put Him to death. But they said, Not on the festival-day, lest perhaps there should be a tumult among the people.

[And when Jesus was in Bethania, in

St. Mark xiv. 1—11.

Now the feast of the Pasch, and of the azymes was after two days.

And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might by some wile lay hold on Him and kill Him.

But they said, Not on the festival-day, lest there should be a tumult among the people.

[And when He was in Bethania, in

St. Luke xxii. 1—11.

Now the feast of unleavened bread, which is called the Pasch, was at hand.

And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might put Jesus to death.

But they feared the people.

St. Matt. xxvi. 7—13.

the house of Simon the leper, there came to him a woman having an alabaster-box of precious ointment, and poured it on His head as He was at table. And the disciples seeing it, had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this might have been sold for much and given to the poor. And Jesus knowing it, said to them, Why do you trouble this woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon Me. For the poor you have always with you, but Me you have not always.

For she in pouring this ointment upon My Body, hath done it for My burial.

Amen I say to you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memory of her.]

St. Mark xiv. 4—9.

the house of Simon the leper, and was at meat there came a woman having an alabaster-box of ointment of precious spikenard, and breaking the alabaster-box she poured it out upon His head. Now there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For this ointment might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and given to the poor. And they murmured against her. But Jesus said, Let her alone, why do you molest her? She hath wrought a good work upon Me. For the poor you have always with you, and whensoever you will, you may do them good, but Me you have not always. What she had, she hath done, she is come beforehand to anoint My Body for the burial. Amen I say to you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that

St. Luke.

St. Matt. xxvi. 14—16.

Then went one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, to the chief priests, and said to them, What will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? But they appointed him thirty pieces of silver. And from henceforth he sought opportunity to betray Him.

St. Mark xiv. 10, 11.

also which she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her.]

And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests, to betray Him to them. Who hearing it were glad, and they promised him they would give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

St. Luke xxii. 3—6.

And Satan entered into Judas, who was surnamed Iscariot, one of the twelve. And he went and discoursed with the chief priests and the magistrates how he might betray Him to them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised. And he sought opportunity to betray Him in the absence of the multitude.

§ 150.—*The Paschal Supper made ready.*

St. Matt. xxvi. 17—20.

And on the first day of the azymes the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Pasch?

But Jesus said, Go ye into the city to a certain man, and say to him,

St. Mark xiv. 12—17.

Now on the first day of the unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the Pasch, the disciples say to Him, Whither wilt Thou that we go and prepare for Thee to eat the Pasch?

And He sendeth two of His disciples, and saith to them, Go ye into

St. Luke xxii. 7—14.

And the day of the unleavened bread came, on which it was necessary that the Pasch should be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go, and prepare for us the Pasch, that we may eat. But they said, Where wilt Thou that we prepare?

But He said to them, Behold, as you go into the city, there shall

St. Matt. xxvi. 19, 20.
The Master saith,
My time is near at
hand, with thee I
make the Pasch
with My disciples.

St. Mark xiv. 14—17.
the city, and there
shall meet you a
man carrying a
pitcher of water,
follow him, and
whithersoever he
shall go in, say to
the master of the
house, The Master
saith, Where is My
refectory, where I
may eat the Pasch
with My disciples?
And he will show
you a large dining-
room furnished,
and there prepare
ye for us.

St. Luke xxii. 11—14.
meet you a man
carrying a pitcher
of water, follow
him into the house
where he entereth
in. And you shall
say to the good
man of the house,
The Master saith
to thee, Where is
the guest-chamber,
where I may eat
the Pasch with My
disciples? And he
will show you a
large dining-room
furnished, and
there prepare.

And the disciples
did as Jesus ap-
pointed to them,
and they prepared
the Pasch. But
when it was even-
ing, He sat down
with His twelve
disciples.

And His disci-
ples went their way,
and came into the
city, and they found
as He had told
them, and they pre-
pared the Pasch.
And when evening
was come, He com-
eth with the twelve.

And they going,
found as He had
said to them, and
made ready the
Pasch. And when
the hour was come,
He sat down, and
the twelve Apos-
tles with Him.

§ 151.—*The Washing of the feet.*

St. John xiii. 1.

Before the festival-day of
the Pasch, Jesus knowing
that His hour was come, that
He should pass out of this
world to the Father, having
loved His own who were in
the world, He loved them
unto the end.

St. Luke xxii. 15—18.

And He said to them,
With desire I have desired

St. Luke xxii. 16—18.

to eat this Pasch with you,
before I suffer. For I say
to you, that from this time I
will not eat it, till it be
fulfilled in the kingdom of
God. And having taken the
chalice, He gave thanks, and
said, Take, and divide it
among you. For I say to
you, that I will not drink of
the fruit of the vine, till the
Kingdom of God come.

St. John xiii. 2—20.

And when supper was

St. John xiii. 3—11.

made, (the devil having put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him,) knowing that the Father had given Him all things into His hands, and that He came from God, and goeth to God, He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments, and having taken a towel, girded Himself. After that He putteth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.

He cometh therefore to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, Lord dost Thou wash my feet?

Jesus answered, and said to Him, What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.

Peter saith to Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet.

Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with Me.

Simon Peter saith to Him, Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.

Jesus saith to him, He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly. And you are clean; but not all. For He knew who he was that would

St. John xiii. 12—20.

betray Him; therefore He said, You are not all clean.

Then after He had washed their feet and taken His garments, being sat down again, He said to them, Know you what I have done to you? You call Me Master, and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If then, I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also. Amen, amen, I say to you, The servant is not greater than his lord, neither is the apostle greater than He that sent him. If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them.

I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen. But that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with Me, shall lift up his heel against Me.¹ At present I tell you, before it come to pass, that when it shall come to pass, you may believe that I am He. Amen, amen, I say to you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me.

¹ Psalm xi. 10.

§ 152.—*Our Lord points out His betrayer.*

St. Matt. xxvi. 21—25.

And whilst they were eating, He said, Amen I say to you, that one of you is about to betray Me. And they being very much troubled, began every one to say, Is it I, Lord?

St. Mark xiv. 18—21.

And when they were at table and eating, Jesus saith, Amen I say to you, one of you that eateth with Me, shall betray Me. But they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, Is it I?

St. John xiii. 21—30.

When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and He testified, and said, Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you shall betray Me. The disciples therefore looked one upon another, doubting of whom He spoke.

St. Luke xxii. 21—23.

But He answering, said, He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him, but wo to that man, by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed, it were better for him, if that man had not been born.

Who saith to them, One of the twelve, who dippeth with Me his hand in the dish. And the Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him, but wo to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed. It were better for him if that man had not been born.

But yet behold, the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table. And the Son of Man indeed goeth, according to that which is determined, but yet, wo to that man by whom He shall be betrayed. And they began to inquire among themselves which of them it was that should do this thing.

St. Matt.

St. John xiii. 23, 24.

Now there was leaning on Jesus's bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter beckoned to him, and said to him, Who is it of whom He speaketh?

St. Matt. xxvi. 25.

And Judas that betrayed Him, answering said, Is it I, Rabbi? He saith to him, Thou hast said it.

St. John xiii. 25—30.

He therefore leaning on the breast of Jesus, saith to Him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped. And when He had dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

And after the morsel, Satan entered into him. And Jesus said to him, That which thou dost, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew to what purpose He said this unto him. For some thought, because Judas had the purse, that Jesus had said to him, Buy those things which we have need of for the festival-day, or that he should give something to the poor.

He therefore having received the morsel, went out immediately. And it was night.

§ 153.—*Peter is warned about denying our Lord.*

St. John xiii. 31—38.

When he therefore was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God also will glorify Him in Himself; and immediately will He glorify Him.

Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You

St. John xiii. 34—36.

shall seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, Whither I go, you cannot come, so I say to you now. A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.

Simon Peter saith to Him, Lord, whither goest Thou?

St. John xiii. 37, 38.

Jesus answered, Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow hereafter.

Peter saith to Him, Why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thee.

Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me? Amen, amen, I say to thee, The cock shall not crow till thou deny Me thrice.

§ 154.—*The dispute among the disciples.*

St. Luke xxii. 24—38.

And there was also a strife amongst them, which of them should seem to be the greater.

And He said to them, The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and they that have power over them, are called beneficent. But you not so, but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger, and he that is the leader, as he that serveth. For which is greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth.

And you are they who have continued with Me in My temptations, and I dispose to you, as My Father

St. Luke xxii. 30—38.

hath disposed to Me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table, in My Kingdom, and may sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren. Who said to Him, Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death. And He said, I say to Thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, till thou thrice deniest that thou knowest Me.

And He said to them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, did you want anything? But they said, Nothing. Then said He unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip, and he that hath not, let him sell his coat, and buy a sword. For I say to you, that this that is written, must yet be fulfilled in Me, And with the wicked was He reckoned.² For the things concerning Me have an end.

But they said, Lord, here are two swords. And He said to them, It is enough.

² Isaias liii. 12.

§ 155, 156.³—*Our Lord's discourse to His Apostles.*

St. John xiv. 1—31.

Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you, that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to Myself, that where I am, you also may be. And whither I go you know, and the way you know.

Thomas saith to Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?

Jesus said to him, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me. If you had known Me, you would without doubt have known My Father also, and from henceforth you shall know Him, and you have seen Him.

Philip saith to Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.

Jesus saith to him, So long a time have I been with you, and have you not known Me? Philip, he that seeth Me, seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, Show us the Father? Do you not believe, that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you, I speak not of

St. John xiv. 11—21.

Myself. But the Father Who abideth in Me, He doth the works. Believe you not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? Otherwise believe for the very works' sake.

Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do. Because I go to the Father, and whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask Me anything in My name, that I will do.

If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him, but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more. But you see Me, because I live, and you shall live. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.

³ See Preface to this volume.

St. John xiv. 22—27.

Judas said to Him, not the Iscariot, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us, and not to the world?

Jesus answered, and said to him, If any one love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make our abode with him. He that loveth Me not, keepeth not My words. And the word which you have heard is not Mine, but the Father's Who sent Me.

These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you. Peace I leave with you,

St. John xiv. 28—31.

My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid. You have heard that I said to you, I go away, and I come unto you. If you loved Me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it shall come to pass, you may believe. I will not now speak many things with you. For the prince of this world cometh, and in Me he hath not anything. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given Me commandment, so do I. Arise, let us go hence.

§ 155, 156.⁴—*Institution of the Blessed Eucharist.*

St. Matt. xxvi. 26—29.

And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke, and gave to His disciples, and said, Take ye, and eat, this is My Body.

St. Mark xiv. 22—25.

And whilst they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessing, broke, and gave to them, and said, Take ye, this is My Body.

St. Luke xxii. 19, 20.

And taking bread, He gave thanks, and brake, and gave to them, saying, This is My Body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me.

And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of this. For this is

And having taken the chalice, giving thanks, He gave it to them. And they all drank of it. And He said to

In like manner the chalice also, after He had supped, saying, This is the chalice, the New Testament in

⁴ See Preface to this volume.

St. Matt. xxvi. 29.

My Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.

And I say to you, I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the Kingdom of My Father.

St. Mark xiv. 25.

them, This is My Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many.

Amen I say to you, that I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it new in the Kingdom of God.

St. Luke xxii. 20.

My Blood, which shall be shed for you.

§ 156 (b).—*Our Lord's discourse to His Apostles.*

St. John xv. 1-13.

I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He will take away, and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean by reason of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in

St. John xv. 13.

Me. I am the Vine, you the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing. If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you. In this is My Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit, and become My disciples.



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